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WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR BEAR TRAP CANYON UNIT OF LEE METCALF WILDERNESS

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BLM-MT-ES-85-003-4332

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WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT PLAN

FOR THE

BEAR TRAP CANYON UNIT
OF THE LEE METCALF WILDERNESS

MONTANA

Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management

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I. INTRODUCTION

I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE OF PLAN

The Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness is the first Bureau of Land Management actively managed land officially to enter the National Wilderness Preservation System and is one of four units of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness the President signed into law on October 31, 1983. The other portions of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness are managed by the U.S. Forest Service. The Bear Trap is the northernmost unit in the 259,000-acre area and the smallest at 6,000 acres. It is also the one with perhaps the most potential for management and resource problems because of its size, linear configuration, and attraction for fishing and white water floating. This plan has been written to establish management objectives and management actions in order to devise a solution for preserving the wilderness values and providing optimum enjoyment for visitors to the area. It is consistent with the "umbrella" plan covering the entire Lee Metcalf wilderness which was prepared by the Forest Service in consultation with BLM.

B. PLAN'S ORGANIZATION

This plan is organized to provide broad, general direction in the form of wilderness management goals and of a management strategy outline which together will govern the type and degree of management discussed later in the document for specific aspects of wilderness management. The individual goals of these aspects, called elements for purposes of this document, are defined in the Management Objectives section. Issues are identified and solutions proposed under the Current Situation and Assumptions and Management Direction sections.

This plan provides general management direction for the 10 year period 1984-1994. As this is designed to be a working document, temporary or minor permanent changes will be addended as needed. In the case of a major change, especially one affecting allocation of visitor use or a proposed management prescription generated by a significant change in the resource condition of the area (for example, an insect infestation), the altered management plan will be submitted to the public for their consideration. At the end of the 10 year period, the management objectives and statements of current situations and assumptions will be reviewed for possible revisions. Any revisions to the plan will be done in coordination with the Forest Service.

C. WILDERNESS AREA OVERVIEW

1. Location

The Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness is located in southwest Montana in Madison County where the Madison River cuts through the northwestern end of the Madison Range (see Bear Trap Canyon Location Map). It comprises approximately 6,000 acres (actual acreage to be determined after final boundary location) adjacent to, or encompassing, the Madison River for approximately nine miles. The canyon is about 31 miles roughly southwest of Bozeman, Montana, just south of Montana Highway 84. It is accessed from and is about three miles upstream of the Red Mountain Campground.

2. Unique Attributes of the Area

An outstanding feature and attraction of the Bear Trap is the white water floating. Floating the Bear Trap offers possibly the most exciting and challenging white water in Montana. The area also contains excellent fishing opportunities. The Madison River has been identified as a Class I fishery by Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks for its exemplary fishing values. Outstanding solitude and natural values attract recreationists looking for a wilderness environment for their activities.

LEE METCALF WILDERNESS

LEE METCALF WILDERNESS

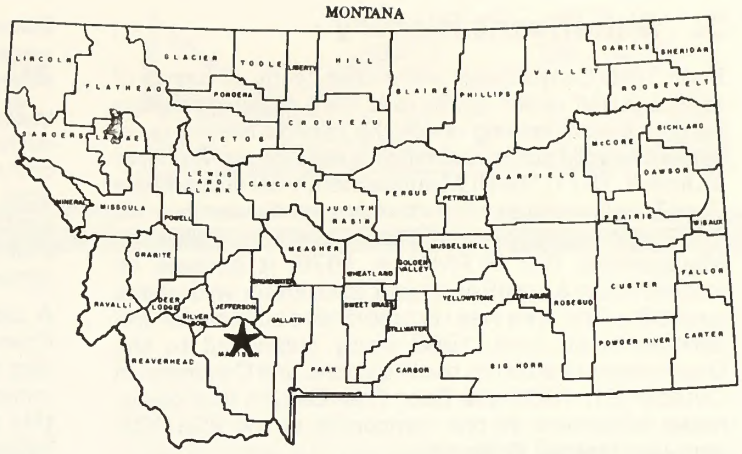
Bear Trap Canyon (A), a subpart of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness, is the first Congressionally designated wilderness to be managed solely by the Bureau of Land Management. It encompasses 6,000 acres of river and canyon environment bordering the Madison River. For additional information contact:

Butte District Office
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 3388
Butte, Montana 59702-3388
(406) 494-5059

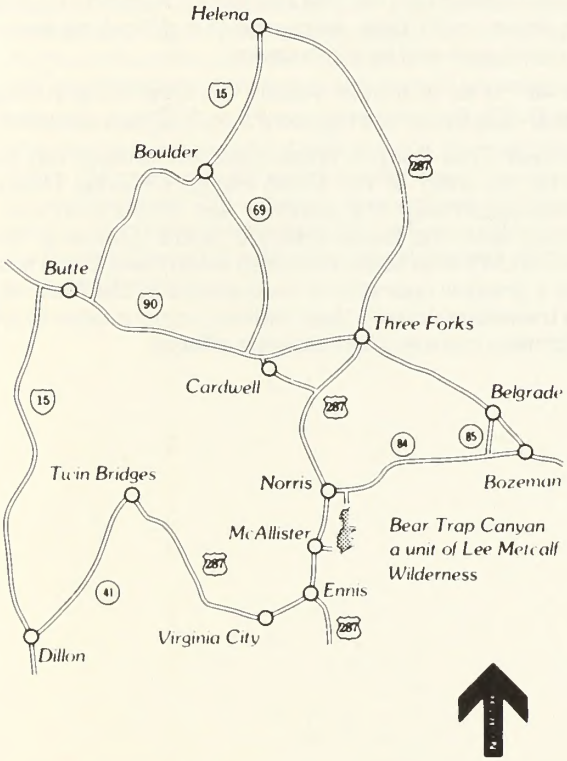
The other three units of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness are administered by the U.S. Forest Service. One subpart, Spanish Peaks (B), consists of 78,000 acres of glaciated alpine scenery and mountain peaks rising to 11,000 feet. Taylor-Hilgard (C), the second unit, covers 141,000 acres along the snowy crest of the Madison Range. The final portion, Monument Mountain (D), is a special wildlife protection zone of 34,000 acres designated to enhance protection of the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem.

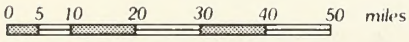
Gallatin National Forest
U.S. Forest Service
P.O. Box 130
Federal Building
Bozeman, Montana 59715
(406 587-5271

Beaverhead National Forest
U.S. Forest Service
P.O. Box 1258
Dillon, Montana 59725
(406) 683-2312



Vicinity Map
Bear Trap Canyon





one inch represents approximately 30 miles

3. Significant History

Bear Trap Canyon was withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under public land laws, including mining laws, and from leasing under the mineral leasing laws, subject to valid claims published in the *Federal Register* of June 9, 1971. The BLM subsequently established the Bear Trap Canyon as a Primitive Area on September 13, 1972. With the passage of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) in 1976, it became an Instant Study Area (ISA) subject to study for wilderness suitability. The area was recommended suitable for wilderness in an April, 1980 study submitted to the Department of Interior, the President, and Congress. In October 31, 1983, the Bear Trap Canyon was designated wilderness as one component of the 259,000-acre Lee Metcalf Wilderness.

4. General Management Situation

Use has continued to increase in the Bear Trap Canyon due to its fishing, floating, and scenic qualities; and it is expected to increase further with wilderness designation. The launch site for floating the canyon is on land managed by the Montana Power Company for hydroelectric production. There is a need for parking and launching facilities. The take-out spot is also on private land that the BLM is attempting to acquire by exchange. Two commercial outfitters are permitted to operate in the canyon. Each has a desired lunch stopping place. These are sometimes alternated with the other limited camp sites in the canyon so none is exhibiting any significant evidence of overuse.

A trail traverses the entire canyon on the east side of the river, and another trail runs about four miles on the west side from the lower north end.

Pedestrian access to the area is primarily from the north end as the south end was closed a few years ago because of a potential safety hazard. The southern end of the trail is threatened by the emergency outlet of the powerhouse which is designed to release massive amounts of water with minimal warning if a power failure occurs.

Essentially all visitors are confined by topography to the water or trails. A few visitors, however, do explore the side drainages.

In order to decrease the sociological impacts of larger outfitter parties on bankside users, overnight use by commercial outfitters has not been permitted. The area does not exhibit a lot of overnight use by the private sector either, although some does occur. It is assumed that this will increase, particularly if the south entrance remains closed to foot traffic.

A cabin that was located at the mouth of Bear Trap Creek no longer exists, and associated garbage including several old car bodies have been removed from the canyon. A life-estate agreement allowed occupancy of this cabin by a long time resident. Since the cabin no longer exists, the agreement is terminated. The imprints of human involvement have essentially been eliminated.

Montana Power Company (MPC) has a powerhouse on the south end outside the wilderness area for generating electricity. This is the launching point for floaters. Parking in this area becomes very congested as the area is very small and narrow. The area is designed to provide parking only for MPC vehicles. Launching is off a very steep, rocky bank which makes it difficult to lower rafts and gear and to climb down.

The Air Force practices weekly low level flying in this area. B-52s fly across the canyon at 500 feet altitudes.

The Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness is managed day to day by the staff of the Dillon Resource Area, Dillon, Montana, although the planning was prepared in conjunction with the Butte District, Butte, Montana. As this is BLM's first solely managed wilderness, there has been a greater operational involvement of the District, on a transitional basis, than will likely occur in later BLM wilderness management planning efforts.

II. OVERALL GOALS FOR THE WILDERNESS AREA

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The first and dominate goal is to provide for the long-term protection and preservation of the area's wilderness character under a principal of nondegradation. The area's natural condition, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation, and any ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value will be managed so that they will remain unimpaired.

The second goal is to manage the wilderness area for the use and enjoyment of visitors in a manner that will leave the area unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as a wilderness. The wilderness resource will be dominant in all management decisions where a choice must be made between preservation of wilderness character and visitor use.

The third goal is to manage the area using a minimum of tools, equipment, or structures to successfully, safely, and economically accomplish the objective. The chosen tool, equipment, or structure should be the one that least degrades wilderness values temporarily or permanently. Management will seek to preserve spontaneity of use and as much freedom from regulation as possible.

The fourth goal is to manage nonconforming but accepted uses permitted by the Wilderness Act and subsequent laws so as to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of the area's wilderness character. Nonconforming uses are the exception rather than the rule, therefore, emphasis is placed on maintaining wilderness character.

III. MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

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Within the wilderness area, the primary management tool will involve use of the Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) process. LAC depends upon indicators of potential resource damage to trigger management action. Rather than trying to estimate the number of visitors that will cause unacceptable resource damage (the carrying capacity concept), the emphasis in LAC is to identify conditions that signal the start of unwanted adverse changes in the physical environment and/or on users' perceptions of the apparent naturalness of that environment.

Determining the limits of acceptable change is an involved process that must address biological and physical resources as well as sociological and psychological expectations of users. Streamside vegetative conditions will be monitored as well as popular campsite locations. Both bankside and water users will be surveyed during the summer of 1984 and periodically thereafter at five year intervals to determine user expectations and perceptions of their wilderness experience in the canyon. Existing photo plots located in high use areas will be monitored for trend and condition. Visitor use data will be gathered, and favored use areas will be identified. From these studies, BLM will establish environmental and social management standards which will serve as the limits of acceptable change in the Bear Trap. Full documentation of this process and of the standards set will be available at the Butte District Office. Once standards are exceeded, management actions will include the use of floating allocations (commercial and noncommercial), changes in the number and locations of trail(s) and trailhead(s), stay limits (including overnight and day use restrictions for various uses/activities), and disallowing or discouraging activities or practices that would result in unacceptable use conflicts and/or resource impacts. Although existing controls on floating activities (with reviews based on LAC) would be maintained, limits on the amount of foot traffic (hikers, fishermen, etc.) would not be immediately initiated. Rather, the intent would be to educate and instill good behavior and wilderness ethics in users. Only when such practices do not maintain established social and environmental standards will use limits for such activities be imposed (registration, rationing such as reservation systems, etc.). The size and narrow configuration of the wilderness area precludes physically redistributing use within the area.

The greatest opportunities to mitigate user impacts on wilderness quality exist outside the wilderness area in the upper canyon (southern portion) and in the lower canyon (northern portion). In the upper canyon, only floating put-in facilities/opportunities will be provided. The existing trailhead closure will be maintained, and facilities/activities in the remainder of the upper canyon will be limited to only day use purposes/facilities. Similarly, in the lower canyon (northern portion), overnight facilities will be provided away from trailheads into the wilderness area with only day use activities/facilities allowed near trailheads.

Day use facility development (upper and lower canyon) will be designed to discourage overnight (camping) use and reduce the amount of use (limit size of parking area, etc.). Consideration will also be given to providing quality opportunities for dispersed and developed camping away from the wilderness area. The overall intent at each end of the canyon will be to avoid pursuing actions that encourage, promote, or funnel use into the wilderness area.

Brochures for the Lee Metcalf Wilderness, of which Bear Trap Canyon is one of four units, will be designed to inform the public of the types of wilderness experiences offered by the various units. This will assist in reducing over use and user conflicts in the Bear Trap Canyon unit. Users desiring a remote and extensive wilderness experience will be directed to the larger units in the Lee Metcalf; while those seeking day use, white water, and fishing opportunities would be directed to Bear Trap Canyon.

IV. OBJECTIVES FOR MANAGEMENT OF WILDERNESS ELEMENTS

Based on the management direction derived from the Wilderness Act (P.L. 88-577), FLPMA (Sec. 603), and the BLM Wilderness Management Policy, the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness will be managed to minimize the impact of man and technology. Management will seek to minimize the impact of use rather than use itself. In this respect, users will be temporary visitors who leave no permanent imprint of their use. The forces of nature will dominate the landscape; visitors activity will be limited to that of an unobtrusive observer. Manipulation of the native flora, fauna, or the surface of the land will not be allowed.

Wilderness exemplifies freedom, but is characterized more by the absence of human impact than by an absence of human controls. Management will be tailored to preserve spontaneity of use and as much freedom from regimentation as possible, while preserving the naturalness of the wilderness resource.

To the extent that the wilderness resource is not impaired, the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness will be managed to provide for opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation; featuring solitude, freedom from the intrusion of unnatural sights and sounds, the chance to experience unmodified natural ecosystems, and recreation experience without mechanized aids in an environment where one's successes and failures are directly dependent on one's abilities and knowledge.

RECREATION

A. Management Objectives

Recreation will be managed to provide a spectrum of outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation featuring a natural wilderness environment, solitude, physical and mental challenge, and inspiration consistent with preservation of wilderness values.

B. Current Situation and Assumptions

1. Current Situation

The area offers outstanding primitive recreation opportunities of varying degrees for hiking, bank fishing, camping, nature study and photography, white water floating, float fishing, and hunting. Canyon scenery contributes to all these forms of recreation.

BLM studies (Baty 1977 and BLM, MDFWP 1981) show the area to be important as a primary destination point for local and regional residents, with increasing use from nonresidents throughout the United States. Recreation use inventories indicate that about half the use of Bear Trap is by Bozeman area residents, one-quarter from the rest of Montana, and one-quarter from nonresidents. Good fishing, hiking, and white water floating in a wild, scenic canyon environment are the chief attractions.

An estimate of the peak season use for the four most popular recreational activities is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1

***Estimated Recreation Visits to Bear Trap Canyon—1983**

Activity	% of Total Use	Recreation Visits
Bank Fishing	54	1,822
Recreation Floating	24	810
Hiking	15	507
Float Fishing	7	236
Total	100	3,375

*Estimated annual use during peak use season, May 15 - September 7

It is conservatively estimated that approximately 700 recreation visits occur during the remainder of the year—estimated total annual use is 4,000 recreation visits. Most of this use is associated with bank fishing as this section of the Madison River is legally open to fishing year-round. Ninety percent or more of all existing recreational use is day use oriented. The area sees very occasional use by horseback mounted visitors.

There exists within the narrow 8.5-mile corridor only 160 acres with slopes less than 30%. The vast majority of this 160 acres is located on both sides of the river on the northern end or at the mouth of Bear Trap Creek on the east side. Such slope limitations concentrate use within that 160 acres. In addition, the major portion of the 160 acres is located immediately adjacent along both sides of the river, which is the primary recreation attraction in the area. Thus, topography, size, configuration, and use concentration along the river severely limit the area's ability to accommodate use and still maintain the area's wilderness qualities.

Competition between floaters, hikers, and campers for the limited space suitable for lunch spots and campsites in the canyon is common. Compared to other areas of equal size, carrying capacity within the canyon is relatively small, due to topography and the linear nature of the area suitable for most recreation uses.

The main access to the canyon is by an 8-mile trail running the length of the wilderness area on the east side of the river. Visitors reach the single trailhead on the north via a 3.4-mile access road that is rough but generally suitable for most vehicles. The single primary trailhead causes an increase in visitor contact due to the need to double back on the trail but preserves a pocket of solitude at the southern end of the wilderness.

The trailhead presently receives moderate overnight use. Trailhead campers in general enter the wilderness on a day use basis. Other back country users must share the relatively small parking area with campers. Some indications of use problems; such as litter, human waste, and multiple fire rings; are evident. Existing facilities include a small parking area and a single unit toilet.

The canyon has only 14-16 small areas suitable for camping or for river stops. While only a small portion of visitors camp in the primitive canyon, the limited amount of available camping space is already a problem in some instances. The largest area of flat terrain and a popular campsite is at the mouth of Bear Trap Creek, for which the canyon is named.

In 1978, the southern trailhead was closed partly due to the dangerous trail crossing in front of MPC's Madison Power Plant emergency overflow chute. Other reasons for closure involved the physical limitations on parking space in the canyon, a need by BLM to minimize interference with MPC operations on land owned and managed by MPC and a desire to enhance solitude opportunities on the south end of the canyon. Closure of the trailhead has reduced some of the associated safety, use pressure, and parking problems in the vicinity of the power plant. However, increased floating activity unrelated to the trail closure has caused some crowding problems in the powerhouse area. Even with the closed trailhead, fishermen still periodically request access through the plant and trailhead or evade the restriction by walking immediately above and around the plant. Fishermen have the option of crossing the footbridge upstream of the powerhouse and following the existing trail downstream on the west side of the river if they choose to fish the southern part of the wilderness.

An unmaintained and unsigned fishing trail on the west side of the river provides secondary access, extending approximately 4.5 miles into the Bear Trap from the north end. Occasional motorized use occurs on a spur trail from the canyon rim, which intersects the west side trail about two miles inside the area. Some horse use occurs, especially by hunters going up Bear Trap Creek during the fall to access the Forest Service land to the east.

The west side trailhead is located at the mouth of Warm Springs Creek. It is also the main boat takeout point for Bear Trap white water floaters.

Generally, most floaters launch at the Madison Power Plant. Upstream from the power plant, the river is unnavigable during low flows due to exposed rocks and gravel beds, and is extremely dangerous for floating during normal to high flows.

Boats and equipment must be transported over a seven to eight foot, near vertical ledge at the launch site. This situation presents some safety problems; and because equipment unloading and boat launching over the ledge is difficult, increases the time period during which the access road is blocked. A more critical problem occurs when unauthorized private vehicles are parked and left at the power plant. All of this further compounds the problems caused by the parking area's size and physical limitations which makes it marginal even for MPC employees.

Within the wilderness area, the river contains difficult white water sections, including three major rapids that are extremely hazardous, especially for inexperienced boaters. At peak flows, various sections approach the limits of navigability for experienced white water boaters. There is no information currently available to visitors concerning running the river safely.

The overall use pattern is best described as a concentration of use at the northern end of the area with few recreationists using the core area of the canyon, where the best opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation are located. The northern end of the area is, in many ways, a day use extension of the dispersed, seminatural recreation area outside the Bear Trap. Most of this use is associated with day fishing activities. It follows that at least two distinct groups, day use and those seeking a wilderness experience, both with different expectations concerning primitive and natural conditions, visit the wilderness.

Table 2 shows estimates of peak season users (May 15-September 7) who visit what is considered to be the core of the wilderness area roughly the area around and to the south of Bear Trap Creek. With the south trailhead closed, the area where solitude may be expected actually extends at present, to the south edge of the wilderness. The estimates show that from 1979 to 1983, approximately 250% and 75% increases have occurred in boat and foot travel, respectively.

TABLE 2

ESTIMATED* PEAK SEASON USE (May 15-September 7)

	1979	1980	1983
Travel by foot[1]	400*	600*	700*
Travel by boat[2]	300**	450**	1,050**

[1]Includes hikers and bank fishermen
[2]Includes recreation floating and float fishing (commercial and noncommercial)

*Derived from Montana Power Company float use figures trail register signatures at the previously existing Bear Trap Creek cabin and from use data extrapolated and projected from the 1977 BLM and 1981 BLM-DFW&P User surveys.

River runners make up only 31% of the total use of the wilderness. However, they make up more than one-half of the visitors who reach the core of the area. Best available data indicates that commercial use (guided floating and float fishing) makes up slightly less than 60% of the total number of boat users. Since 1980, 13 applications have been received from outfitters for guided floating and float fishing permits in Bear Trap Canyon. Prior to 1980, the bulk of the commercial use had been by one outfitter.

Based on the projected use estimates provided by the outfitter applicants, the potential exists for some increase in demand for guided floating use in the canyon. While noncommercial floating and shore use of the core area are increasing, there are no indications that these uses would multiply in the immediate future on the order of increases in commercial floating. Much of the interest and demand for commercial white water floating is due to the limited number of commercial floating opportunities presently available in the western states.

One hunting outfitter camp is located in the Bear Trap on land acquired from the Forest Service. This is an historic camp which will be permitted through the Dillon Resource Area.

Portions of the northern part of the Bear Trap Wilderness have been included in the past in a local triathlon event, the Liver Eating Johnson race. BLM wilderness regulations preclude such competitions inside wilderness.

Existing and potential increases in use have generated urgent concerns in regard to preserving opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. These aspects were underscored by the results of the 1981 BLM/MDFWP user survey. Although the majority of users sampled were satisfied with their recreation experience, a substantial minority (especially shore users) indicated the number of users encountered (particularly floaters) was beginning to become a problem. It is important to note that a large percentage of users sampled had considerable previous experience recreating in wilderness or roadless areas. However, a survey conducted in the summer of 1984 did not find the same results. The vast majority of users expressed satisfaction with the number of people whom they encountered in the wilderness.

Probably the best opportunities for protective management of the wilderness values of the river lie not within the wilderness itself but rather outside its boundaries. Information and education of visitors in order to instill a wilderness ethic and management of access to control use are the two best management tools to protect wilderness values and both of these occur primarily offsite.

In addition, the types of uses north and south of the area parallel and complement those occurring immediately inside the wilderness. The northern end of the wilderness is, in many ways, a day use extension of the dispersed recreation occurring outside the Bear Trap, and the recreation access operations adjacent to the south end mirror the wilderness entrance activities that characterize use immediately inside the wilderness boundaries.

Given these factors, it makes sense that the BLM should have primary administration of recreation and lead maintenance responsibilities for facilities immediately adjacent north and south of the area. Direction for integrated recreation management has already been written in the 1981 Bear Trap Canyon Recreation Management Plan/Environmental Assessment Record, portions of which are included in this plan as Appendix II.

2. Assumptions

The larger nearby Forest Service units in the Lee Metcalf Wilderness will bring national attention to the Bear Trap.

Bear Trap white water floating opportunities are among the best in Montana.

The salmon fly hatch period and weekends are expected to continue to be the primary peak use periods. Any improved downstream sport fishery will result in a significant increase in this activity in the wilderness area.

Regulations limiting the number of visitors will be put into effect only after other reasonable measures to minimize impacts have failed. Indirect management measures may include: improve, maintain or lower standards of access roads, trailhead facilities, and trails; identify the range of recreation opportunities in surrounding areas; educate users to basic concepts of protecting the wilderness ecosystems; and advise visitors of little-used areas and general patterns of use.

If it becomes necessary to establish priorities for wilderness visitation, highest priority will be given uses which (a) least alter the wilderness environment and (b) are dependent upon the wilderness environment. Other users will be encouraged to visit areas outside the wilderness.

Improvements must be necessary for the protection of the wilderness resource and not for the convenience of users. Authorized improvements will be designed and constructed of natural materials and designed to harmonize with the environment. Corrals will not be permitted for either public or commercial livestock.

The landing of aircraft within the wilderness is prohibited unless specifically authorized in the legislation designating an area. Air dropping of supplies is also prohibited. Exceptions may be granted for administrative purposes.

Due to the small size of the area and topographical restrictions on visitation, horseback use would be detrimental to maintaining resource values in the canyon and to avoiding user conflicts during the main user season.

Adequate funding for wilderness management and for management/facilities in areas adjacent to the wilderness will be provided.

A key element in integrated recreation management of the Bear Trap Canyon, including extensive recreation and recreation access lands north and south of the wilderness, is a Cooperative Management Agreement (CMA) with MPC. This agreement would define roles and would address trail blocking and maintenance, safety considerations connected with the power plant overflow, enforcement, and water flow level information dissemination, as well as other recreation, fishing and hunting issues. The General Office and Headquarters of MPC is working with the BLM to reach a mutually acceptable Cooperative Agreement.

C. Management Direction

1. Management Policies

Environmental and social management standards will be established through the use of the Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) process and public participation. If and when the wilderness resource or its values are jeopardized, recreation use will be reduced, regulated, or excluded based on LAC standards.

2. Management Actions

Because of the small size of the area, heavy use, and channelization of that use by the steep topography; horse use is deemed inappropriate in the wilderness area during the main user season and will be prohibited. Trailhead information signs and brochures will warn visitors that horses and mules are excluded from the area other than from October 15 to December 15(Dillon Resource Area (RA) Outdoor Recreation Planner) .

Trailhead access will be limited to the existing northern trailhead on the east side of the river. The southern trailhead is to remain closed. The west side trailhead is to remain unsigned on both its southern and northern portions.

Visitor use data will be collected with visitor register boxes, cameras, electric-eye counters, interviews, observation and by indirect means on a yearly basis. The exact mix of measurement techniques will be dependent on available personnel (Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner).

No spur trails along either side of the corridor will be developed.

No private user allocation will be considered at this time, but the canyon will be closely monitored. Visitor preference surveys, photo plot trend studies in heavy use areas, visitation numbers counts and professional perceptions of use impacts will be used as baseline data to help define standards for limits of acceptable change (LAC). Future monitoring of the effects of visitation on both the physical environment and on other recreationists in relation to the LAC standards will indicate when an overall allocation should be made. Onsite and offsite environmental education will be used to instill proper wilderness behavior and ethics.

The handout brochure will encourage visitors to haul out trash whenever possible. (Pack-in-pack-out).

When allocations between commercial and noncommercial floaters are eventually made, the two sectors will be split 50/50 unless the long-term use trend indicates a demand different from 50/50.

All floating activities will be limited to day use only. There will be no overnight camping.

All floaters will use firepans on which to build cooking and warming fires. Hikers will not be required to carry out ashes, but will be requested to use existing fire rings if available to centralize ash buildup. Handout brochures will inform river and bankside users as to restrictions.

Use limits/allocations on hiking/bank fishing will not be immediately initiated. LAC standards will be set for bankside users but allocation will be deferred. Indirect rather than direct user controls will be used. Onsite and offsite environmental education will be used to instill proper wilderness behavior and ethics.

LAC standards in coordination with periodic monitoring will be used to determine if and when use limits/controls should be imposed (rationing, etc.) on bank fishing/hiking.

Only day use activities/facilities will be allowed at trailhead/launch sites. Facilities will be designed to discourage overnight use.

BLM will consider the need for porta-pottie enclosed toilet for commercial and private floaters.

Through the comprehensive planning effort for all units of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness and the wilderness public brochures, the public will be directed to units best able to satisfy user needs while maintaining wilderness quality (Butte District Office (DO) Wilderness Coordinator).

No designated campsites will be established within the wilderness area. Bankside users will be educated and encouraged to follow minimal impact camping procedures.

A three day stay limit (overnight camping) will be imposed on all land users. With the corridor effect created by the steep canyon walls and the scarcity of useable camping sites, occupancy beyond this limit would significantly affect other visitor's perceptions of solitude.

Due to increasing sanitation problems, BLM will study the need for an inconspicuous vault or composting toilet at the old cabin site (Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner).

The trash still remaining around the old cabin site at the mouth of Bear Trap Creek will be cleaned up during the summer of 1984. Trash pickup will continue on an as-needed yearly basis in succeeding years (Dillon RA Recreation Planner).

A Cooperative Management Agreement (CMA) will be developed with MPC by September 30, 1985 to define roles in the management of recreation both inside and outside the wilderness. Areas of mutual interest include management, safety, and enforcement (Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator).

Mechanized transport is specifically restricted in the Wilderness Act of 1964. In order to prevent misunderstanding by bicycle enthusiasts, off-road mountain bikes will be prohibited in the Bear Trap. Trailhead information signs and brochures will warn visitors that bicycles are excluded from the area (Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator and Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner).

BLM and the Liver Eating Johnson race organizers will find an alternative route for the running portion of the race outside the wilderness boundaries. (Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator).

COMMERCIAL USE

A. Management Objectives

Commercial use will be managed to utilize commercial outfitters and guides where necessary and consistent with the protection of the wilderness resource, to bring the value of wilderness to those who cannot otherwise avail themselves of those values, to help promote understanding of wilderness, and to demonstrate primitive wilderness living skills.

B. Current Situation and Assumptions

1. Current Situation

Commercial outfitters on the Bear Trap Canyon must be permitted by both BLM and by the State of Montana. In 1981, the number of outfitters on the Bear Trap was limited to those with historical use precedence through the Bear Trap Canyon Recreation Management Plan (1981) until an equitable allocation between commercial and noncommercial floaters and a decision on expanding or changing the outfitter pool could be made. There are presently two outfitters permitted in the Bear Trap Canyon. Bear Trap Express specializes in guiding fishing parties and is authorized 30 launches per year. Mountain Whitewater is aimed more at recreational floating although they do occasionally guide float fishermen as well. The company is authorized 22 launches per year. The total of 52 commercial launches per year constitutes the historical use on the Bear Trap. Another outfitter shared in the launches until 1983 when his permit was cancelled due to nonuse and to noncompliance with some of the permit requirements. The available launches were divided up among the remaining two outfitters. On most years, high water levels and the seasonality of outfitter floating operations limit commercial boating to approximately 100 days.

The number of boats per launch is restricted for both outfitters as is the party size. The maximum boat party size is 8 people, including the guide, and the maximum number of boats is two per launch. In order to decrease the period of time outfitters spend in the canyon, no outfitter camping is allowed although lunch stops are permitted and used by both outfitters. Launch dates are allocated by BLM and are staggered to prevent overuse. Eighty percent of the 240 float fishermen (or 192 people) are estimated to be associated with the commercial outfitters. Approximately 50% of the approximately 810 recreational floating visitors (or 405 people) are commercial outfitting clients.

The demand for commercial floating permits greatly exceeds the supply as there are presently 13 outfitting companies on the waiting list to fill available commercial outfitting opportunities. Based on the projected use estimates of the outfitter applicants, the potential exists for a substantially increased demand for floating use in the Bear Trap, which would also subsequently increase the total floating use (commercial and noncommercial).

One important limiting factor on the number of commercial launches is the put-in facility at the powerhouse. The site is difficult to launch from and does not have adequate parking. It is the preferred launch option at present. Although clearing the river channel and increasing parking 300 yards upstream so that the high flow put-in can be used in low water conditions is being considered, the capacity of the launch facilities will always be limited. Such a development would require clearance from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

One hunting guide and outfitter has historically placed his base camp on the portion of the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness recently acquired from the Forest Service in the legislation creating the Lee Metcalf Wilderness. Although the base camp is on BLM land on the southwestern edge of the area, hunting operations are conducted on the national forest.

2. Assumptions

Demand for outfitted river floating experiences will substantially increase in the future. Most of this increase will likely be attributable to commercial river floating rather than to commercially outfitted float fishing.

An increase in permitted outfitter activity will result in an increase in conflict with people bankside fishing and potentially with noncommercial float parties. According to the Madison River Recreation Study Summary Tables for Bear Trap Canyon Users (1981), although the majority of bankside users are satisfied with the number of float parties that passed by, 30% of those bankside fishing would support or strongly support restricting the number of floaters using the river.

This figure suggests that in the perception of a minority of people who bankside fish, their experience with floating users exceeds their desired encounter level. While not conclusive, this information does indicate that the canyon may be approaching floating capacity. A survey of visitors perceptions of solitude conducted in 1984 did not substantiate this preliminary indication. Ongoing monitoring will be needed to detect solitude changes in the canyon.

Any change in the present restrictions on outfitter use must be based upon consideration of the Limits of Acceptable Change.

Any decrease in present commercial activity will be implemented only as part of a total allocation for both commercial and noncommercial river floating use. That is, if a decrease in floater allocation is dictated by deteriorating environmental or solitude conditions, the decrease will affect both the commercial and noncommercial sectors of the floating public.

All commercial activities will require a permit.

C. Management Direction

1. Management Policies

In order to satisfy demand, provide for equal opportunity for visitors to experience the Bear Trap, ensure visitor safety, and accommodate those lacking the needed equipment and experience; BLM will allow commercial floater use on the Madison River within the boundaries of the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness.

Following an analysis of the current situation, BLM believes that the Bear Trap Canyon can handle greater commercial use without adverse impact, as long as this use is scheduled mainly on the underutilized week days. We have decided to increase commercial floating by 25 launches. These additional floats will be allocated by a supplemental document to be appended to the Final Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness Management Plan which will be released to the public for review by Feb. 1, 1985. The final selection of the most qualified applicant will be completed by January 31, 1986. This document will provide the current and future basis for analyzing and determing how commercial launches should be allocated. Options to be considered for launches include the following:

— Allocate to one or both present permitted outfitters.
— Allocate to one or more additional outfitters.
— Allocate to existing and new outfitter(s).

The final selection process will be governed by this supplemental document and existing bureau policy.

The two existing commercial river outfitters service two different types of the outfitted public, the float fishing and the recreational floating. Therefore, any replacement permittees will be chosen on the basis of their ability to accommodate the needs of that segment of the public requiring commercial outfitting services as well as on experience, past performance, references, equipment, and all other facets of the applicant's operation.

Nonriver commercial activities permitted in the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness will be limited to the existing historical hunting outfitter/guide operation.

Either rowing frames and oars or multiple paddles will be used to propel commercial boats. We will expect outfitters to use good common sense in setting up and running paddle boat trips.

Outfitter operations will be monitored to ensure stipulation compliance and adequacy of service a minimum of three times during the season.

There will be no assigned lunch spots guaranteed through commercial permit. Traditional occupancy of a particular lunch location is not a guarantee of priority, and outfitters must be flexible in this regard.

In order to help minimize the spread of fire rings and fire debris, outfitters will use firepans on which to build lunch and warming fires. After use, debris will be transported out of the area.

The outfitted public's role in the human waste problem will be monitored as part of an overall evaluation of sanitation in the area. Any change in standard sanitation procedures will occur as a result of the evaluation.

If a permitted outfitter fails to make substantial use for two years, the permit will be cancelled and a replacement outfitter chosen after the second underused season. Given the outfitter applicant waiting list presently on file, the fairest way to award the revoked permit is through a competitive system based on the qualifications of the interested outfitters. The system to award a new permit will be developed and added as a supplement to this plan.

No commercially outfitted party may camp overnight within the wilderness boundaries.

Commercial river use is limited to one launch, by only one outfitter, on any single day with a maximum of two boats per launch and a maximum boat party size of eight, including both clients and guides. These limits are based on past use patterns and may be modified when necessary. Exceptions to boat and party size must be expressly authorized in writing.

Commercial use scheduling will be based on a scheduled meeting between the BLM and the outfitters prior to the floating season.

Adequate seasonal staff will be supplied to enforce commercial use restrictions, inspect outfitter equipment, provide river information through visitor contact, and advise private floaters on equipment needs. Outfitter restrictions will be enforced closely to prevent unpermitted outfitting.

2. Management Actions

Each outfitter's equipment, safety procedures, adherence to permit stipulations, and level of public service will be evaluated at least three times during the floater season. Results will be shared with the Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator, the Butte DO Safety Coordinator and the Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner.

The supplemental document outlining allocation procedures for the additional 25 commercial launches will be completed by April 1, 1985. After the allocation is made, the total of 77 commercial floats will be maintained unless additional data supports a change. A significant decrease in clients, a switch in client interest in a par-

ticular type of outfitter service, or an overall decrease in commercial and noncommercial allocations to protect wilderness values would be some of the reasons to consider a change in outfitter numbers (Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner and Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator).

Commercial and private launches will be monitored throughout the use season to determine potential user conflicts, scheduling needs, and/or adjustments in commercial floating visits for both commercial and private (Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator and Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner).

Commonly used outfitters lunch stops will be monitored to assure compliance with sanitation and fire regulations (Wilderness Ranger and Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner).

Under the provisions of federal law and Montana State Fish and Game laws, commercial users who outfit in the Bear Trap Canyon without a State or BLM outfitter and guide permit will be prosecuted.

ADMINISTRATION

A. Management Objectives

Administration of the wilderness area will be managed to preserve the integrity of the wilderness resource and to conduct necessary administrative activities so as not to degrade that resource.

B. Current Situation and Assumptions

1. Current Situation

The Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness is administered by the Dillon Resource Area. Administrative responsibility for management is vested with the Area Manager and carried out under the technical supervision of the Resource Area Outdoor Recreation Planner and the District Wilderness Coordinator. The District Wilderness Coordinator will be responsible for technical coordination of BLM wilderness policy and regulations for management of the Bear Trap and will serve as liaison between district and resource area programs within the wilderness. The Resource Area Outdoor Recreation Planner will be responsible for day-to-day management of the area and will call on the District Wilderness Coordinator for operations activities when needed.

Fieldwork has been on a hit or miss basis with a summer temporary or volunteer being assigned duties such as clean-up and monitoring and the fire crew doing trail maintenance. In FY84, we have a volunteer scheduled to provide monitoring and maintenance functions for the Bear Trap Canyon. In future years, we hope to be able to fund a seasonal ranger position to help manage the area.

The administrative communication system in the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness is less than adequate. Because of the confined nature of the canyon, much of it is a radio dead spot except from certain locations.

Management practices on adjacent land to the east may affect the wilderness to some extent, especially on the private land and national forest areas not transferred to the Department of Interior. We have no control over uses on the private land and the snowmobiling allowed on adjacent national forest land has a strong potential to slop over onto the wilderness. To be affected by this, visitors would have to be on the east side and out of the canyon. The Madison River attracts many visitors for fishing, floating, camping, etc.; and the area just north of the trailhead is especially popular with visitors who camp either at the developed BLM campground or on surrounding undeveloped land prior to entering the wilderness.

Isolated instances of motorcycles trespassing into the canyon have occurred and the potential for snowmobile trespass on the east rim exists.

Law enforcement, when needed, is difficult because of limited personnel, the area's remoteness, and the difficulty in communicating by radio.

Wilderness permits are not yet required other than permits for commercial floating. While not desirable, permits may be necessary to preserve the wilderness values. A permit system would be implemented when LAC standards are being met or exceeded due to an increase in visitor use.

The ultimate objective of the permit is to protect the wilderness resource and the wilderness experience from excessive physical and psychological impact. The permit is a valuable management tool requiring contact between wilderness managers and wilderness users, with subsequent benefits to both groups.

Such contact supplies information to management about where, when, and how use takes place and for what purposes. It provides the user with information about current use conditions and appropriate wilderness behavior. In the course of the contact, questions can be answered and users directed to the type of experience they seek within or adjacent to the wilderness.

The permit will be increasingly valuable as a management technique because it provides opportunities to promote visitor self-compliance with necessary behavior restrictions and reduces impact on the wilderness. It will help prevent or postpone the need for stricter use controls. Using permits to ration use will be a last resort when all other management techniques have failed to control impacts on the wilderness resource.

However, initiation of a mandatory wilderness permit program would increase expenditures in time and money and, in some instances, require additional personnel. District and area offices would have to remain open seven days a week during the summer to issue permits. Additional clerical time for mail and telephone permit applications and data card punching for information storage and retrieval would also be required.

And most important, the use of the permit interjects government regulation into visitor's outdoor activities which have been traditionally a haven from such presence.

The local wilderness visitor who is used to making multiple visits into the wilderness without restriction would probably incur the greatest inconvenience due to initiation of a mandatory permit system.

2. Assumptions

The need for wilderness administration will continue to grow. It will become increasingly complex and will dictate higher levels of administrative competence and sensitivity.

Qualified, trained, and experienced personnel for wilderness ranger and trail crew positions will continue to be difficult to find for the traditional, short-term summer employment. Except for the rare, dedicated individual, there will continue to be a high turnover of wilderness field personnel (1 to 3 seasons) due to the lack of opportunities for full-time employment and wilderness career ladder.

Wilderness and its management will be an increasingly important public land activity. Recreational use of public lands has been on the increase for several years and this increase is most notable for those visiting remote or wilderness areas. Additional funding and personnel will be required to meet the objectives of this plan and to attain an adequate standard of wilderness management. Law enforcement problems attributable to both design and ignorance will continue to increase as visitation increases.

Providing adequate law enforcement will continue to be difficult.

C. Management Direction

1. Management Policies

All administrative activities will be carried out to minimize their impact on the wilderness environment and the experience of users.

Field projects will be closely supervised to ensure consistency with the goals and objectives of this plan.

Environmental analysis reports will be developed for all projects that may impact the wilderness resource.

Wilderness seasonal employees or volunteers will be competitively selected for desirable combinations of resource management knowledge, back country travel experience and skills, ability to work with the public, and commitment to the preservation of the wilderness resource.

To promote joint understanding of the purposes of wilderness, a close working relationship should be maintained with all state, county, and federal agencies and Montana Power Company that use or influence use of the BLM wilderness.

Motorized equipment will not be allowed within the canyon except for livesaving emergencies.

Personal risks associated with adverse weather conditions, isolation, physical hazards, and lack of rapid communication and travel are inherent in wilderness and it is neither practical nor desirable to eliminate these risks.

Wilderness managers will work cooperatively with the county sheriffs and others involved in search and rescue activities to assure that a reliable system for emergency action exists. This process will involve coordination with the Madison County Sheriff's Department concerning jurisdiction, staffing, and level of involvement of the agencies concerned. Visitors requiring rescue are responsible for the personnel and equipment costs incurred.

Management will seek cooperation with adjacent landowners, such as Flying D Ranch, through educational programs explaining the values of wilderness and the special problems inherent to its management. This is the best way to ensure that innocent, unauthorized trespass activities do not occur.

As the wilderness seasonal employees is in the best position to identify and combat noxious weed infestations, his or her training will include identification of leafy spurge and spotted knapweed and methods of eradication.

2. Management Actions

To aid in the implementation of this plan and the coordination of management efforts, a wilderness coordinator position will be maintained as funding allows. The Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner will take the lead on wilderness management of Bear Trap Canyon if there is not a wilderness coordinator position at the Butte DO. A seasonal wilderness ranger will be maintained to be in charge of on-the-ground operational activities during the summer.

SIGNS

A. Management Objectives

Signing will be unobtrusive and will be the minimum necessary to protect wilderness values and to aid in visitor orientation and dispersion.

B. Current Situation and Assumptions

1. Current Situation

At present, there is a sign closing the east side trail to motorized ingress at its north trailhead and another closing the trail at its southern end to foot travel. There is also a sign closing a spur access linking the west bank trail to the rims above to motorized vehicle access. Visitor registration boxes are presently in place at the northeast trail portal for hikers and at the powerhouse put-in point to ensure registration of floaters. The lower Bear Trap Canyon Project Plan and Environmental Assessment (1984) proposes a visitor information bulletin board at the northeast trailhead that would also serve as a trail sign.

2. Assumptions

Boundary signs will be located at some locations where motorized or mechanical vehicle ingress could occur.

The existing trails are easy enough to follow that additional trail signs are not needed.

Registration boxes are an effective way to monitor visitation.

Regulatory and resource protection information is efficiently disseminated through the use of information boards at visitor concentration sites.

Interpretative signing within the wilderness area will not be used.

C. Management Direction

1. Management Policies

Boundary signs will be placed at the portals identifying Bear Trap as a unit of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness. Boundary signs will be separate from informational bulletin boards.

Signing at wilderness portals will be limited to trail direction signs and official information materials on fire prevention, regulations governing use of the wilderness, and recommended wilderness behavior. Such signs will be located outside the wilderness area boundaries.

Signs needed for management and regulation of use will be installed so as to minimize the physical impact of the sign on the wilderness resource and the psychological impact to the wilderness visitor. The details of color, letter size, wording, etc. will be devised to meet visitor control and other wilderness needs.

Signs may be used to caution visitors of potentially hazardous conditions.

Registration boxes, along with counters and visual observation, will be emplaced and regularly maintained as a recognized means of monitoring the amount of use the area is receiving.

2. Management Actions

A wilderness portal information signboard and registration box and a separate boundary sign will be erected at the northeast trail portal and another at the powerhouse floaters put-in to replace existing materials. Emplacement will be completed by September 30, 1985 (Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner).

Boundary signs will be erected at potential vehicle ingress problem areas as identified.

A sign will be erected at the edge of the river bank immediately downstream of the powerhouse to keep fishermen from using the potentially dangerous emergency overflow area. Completion of this signing, in coordination with MPC, will be accomplished by September 30, 1985 (Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner).

WATER

A. Management Objectives

Water quality will be managed to preserve the flow and quality of the Madison River at least at its present standard and to prevent human-caused contamination of its waters.

B. Current Situation and Assumptions

1. Current Situation

The Madison River, which flows through the Bear Trap Canyon, is diverted just upstream of the wilderness area by a dam and power plant administered by the MPC. Because of the limited storage capacity of Ennis Lake, the Madison dam has little effect on regulating the river's flow. Primary streamflow regulation is provided by natural conditions and by the Hebgen Lake dam upstream. The Madison powerplant is operated as run-of-river to optimize power generation. Above the dam, Ennis Lake is less than 12 feet deep over 75 percent of its surface area. The highest water flow recorded has been at the 10,000 cfs (cubic feet per second) level. More typical high flows are at 4,000 cfs. The MDFWP has appropriated 1,200 cfs from January 1 through May 31, 1,500 cfs from June 1 to June 30, and 1,423 cfs from June 1 to July 15, and 1,300 cfs from July 16 through December 31 for instream flow to provide protection for aquatic life. During the winter months, MPC tries to keep flows at 1,100 cfs if possible according to a verbal agreement with MDFWP; this figure represents the usual low flow level.

The water in the Madison River is used for floating, fishing, irrigation, and power generation. Optimum floating conditions are at the 1,700 to 2,200 cfs flow level. MPC releases water from the dam gradually so it is unlikely that floaters would experience widely vacillating waterflows in the course of a one day float.

Hot summer temperatures affect the shallow water resulting in a average mean temperature increase of 10-15 degrees Fahrenheit in Ennis Lake as compared to levels upstream. The Ennis Lake impoundment is responsible for 3-5 degrees F. increase in water temperature. Meteorological and hydrological conditions affect temperatures to a much greater extent. This warmed water, when released from the dam, provides enjoyable recreational floating.

The warmed water adversely affects the trout fishing in the canyon. Fish growth is stunted, and there is a potential for loss of the fishery. The Madison dam has very little influence on peak streamflow regulation so therefore has little effect on the capacity to move accumulated sediments, although it likely traps some sediments introduced from upstream sources. In some conditions the river's waters may not adequately flush sediments from the bottom of the river, adversely affecting the fishery.

Irrigation is not a fully developed resource use at present, but major increases in water demand downstream are not expected. The present use of water for agriculture, recreation, and hydroelectric power are, however, important to the local economy and to the economy of southwestern Montana.

Although water quality information is scant, the water of Bear Trap Canyon is estimated to be pollution free. Human waste problems may affect water quality and overall sanitation in heavy recreation use areas. Monitoring will be necessary to define the extent of the problem.

The Blue Ribbons of the Big Sky Country Areawide Planning Organization, under a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency, conducted a study of the Madison river. They found that no viable option to improve thermal conditions in Ennis Lake would significantly improve water temperatures or significantly affect trout growth parameters. The completed report was available to the public in 1983.

2. Assumptions

Water yield from the wilderness will be at least as valuable and possibly more valuable in future years.

Thermal pollution in the canyon will continue and may increase although downstream of the wilderness area any change will be negligible.

Use of the canyon's waters for recreation will likely increase.

Increasing use will ultimately necessitate measures to prevent bacterial contamination of heavily used areas of the Madison River and its tributaries.

Major impacts from man will be related to detergents, human waste disposal, irrigation, and fires.

C. Management Direction

1. Management Policies

All wilderness management activities will provide for watershed protection and maintenance of natural water quality.

The water levels of the river through the canyon will be maintained within the present flow level range. If MPC abandons the facility, flows will likely continue to be regulated by Hebgen Lake and by natural conditions.

Water quality measurements; including physical, chemical, and biological parameters; will be made by portable or nonpermanent equipment. Transportation of this equipment will be made by primitive travel means.

Natural water quality levels (physical, chemical, and biological) identified during the monitoring program will be maintained in cooperation with MPC and MDFWP.

Wilderness users will be educated to use proper and safe methods of human waste and detergent disposal and correct methods of fire ash and garbage management.

Floaters will be informed concerning prevalent and anticipated flow levels so that they can make correct decisions as to whether to initiate their floats.

BLM believes that state water quality laws are adequate for water quality protection. Water quantity and timing will be protected by an instream flow reservation, which will be filed with the State of Montana in late 1985.

2. Management Actions

Instream flow levels equivalent to MDFWP's filings will be applied for in order to maintain existing water levels. Action will be initiated by September 30, 1985 (Butte DO Hydrologist).

A water quality monitoring program will be initiated by September 30, 1986 (Butte DO Hydrologist).

Coordination with the MDFWP's Task Force on Thermal Pollution on Ennis Lake will be maintained (Butte DO Hydrologist).

A visitor wilderness use brochure, which will include means to minimize water pollution by human wastes, detergents and fire residue will be finished by September 30, 1984 (Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator).

Coordination with MPC will be pursued to institute some sort of visitor advisory program utilizing a water level stadia rod and water flow information in a handout brochure at the put-in point to ensure that water flow information is disseminated. Target date will be September 30, 1985 (Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator and Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner).

The floaters brochures will emphasize that MPC is not responsible for accidents that occur to floaters in the Bear Trap Canyon.

TRAILS

A. Management Objectives

Trails will be managed to minimize physical and visual impacts upon the land, to disperse visitors, and to permit public access into the area.

B. Current Situation and Assumptions

1. Current Situation

There are presently two foot trails in the wilderness area. The trail that follows the east side of the Madison River was constructed by a BLM crew in 1977-1978. This route originates at the northern edge of the area and runs south eight miles where it was closed off to restrict visitors from the dangerous trail crossing of the power plant's emergency overflow chute. Closure of the southern trailhead has reduced some of the associated safety, use pressure, and parking problems at the power plant. Some safety concerns are still present, however, in the form of poison ivy near the trail on the north end and high water flooding of the northern portion of the trail in early spring which forces visitors to walk on less secure footing upslope.

A second trail that traverses the west side of the Madison River extends approximately 4.5 miles into the area from the north end. This route was created by bank side fishing rather than by formal construction. A spur route from the top of the rims intersecting with the west side trail has seen occasional motorized use although it is presently closed.

The trailhead for the east side trail is accessed by a graveled road from the bridge across the Madison River 3 miles downstream from the northern edge of the wilderness. The trailhead area itself contains a vault outhouse and a vehicle barrier in addition to two undeveloped campsites.

The trailhead for the west side trail is in the process of being acquired by the BLM. It serves as both a trailhead and as a terminus for white water floaters through the Bear Trap. Picnicking and occasional camping occurs in this area. Use of the west side trail has been discouraged by not signing the trail and by forcing recreationists to wade Warm Springs Creek. The Lower Bear Trap Canyon Project Plan and Environmental Assessment (1984), which includes both the wilderness area and lands downstream, has proposed upgraded facilities and increased supervision as well as visitor education to reduce recreation impacts at both sites. Recommendations include gravel hardening of vehicle parking areas, vault toilet emplacement, and sunken post barriers to discourage vehicle ingress. Such improvements would be instrumental in maintaining control of camping, sanitation, and vehicle access at the portals of the wilderness area.

2. Assumptions

Travel by all kinds of users will increase.

No new trails are needed in the area.

Some hardening and modification of both trailheads is needed.

C. Management Direction

1. Management Policies

Existing trails will not be intensively maintained. No new trails be constructed, except for portages around hazardous white water passages.

If major site specific trail damage or trail blockage occurs on the east side trail, hand tool maintenance to the minimum standard necessary to open the trail will be done. No maintenance on the west side trail will be accomplished.

Portal facilities will not exceed that required to accommodate the amount and kind of use desired. Such use will be determined through the Limits of Acceptable Change process as discussed before.

2. Management Actions

If trail maintenance becomes necessary, 4713 funds will be requested from W.O. (Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner).

Implement the Lower Bear Trap Canyon Project Plan and Environmental Assessment (1984) as proposed for the east side trail's trailhead and for proposed de-emphasis of the west side trail's portal by September 29, 1986. 4720 funds will be requested to build and 4712 funds will be requested to maintain these facilities at their proposed level (Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner).

The west side trail's spur road will be physically blocked to prevent motorized vehicle access by September 30, 1984 (Butte DO Operations Chief).

For visitor safety reasons and for enhancement of solitude value by limiting through traffic, the east side trail will remain closed at its southern terminus.

In order to discourage use, the west side trail's trailhead will remain unsigned and less accessible.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

A. Management Objectives

Cultural resources are recognized to be a valuable, nonrenewable resource and a significant supplemental value to wilderness. Management direction will be to evaluate, preserve, protect, and enhance these resources in compliance with federal and state laws and BLM policy.

B. Current Situation and Assumptions

1. Current Situation

Human presence in the canyon appears to have begun as early as 6,000 years ago. The canyon area was used seasonally by prehistoric people for hunting, shelter, fishing, and as a source of wood, chert, and edible plants and berries. A 1977 archeological inventory identified 20 sites, of which 8 are within the wilderness boundaries. These included hunting camps, rock teepee rings, a lithic quarry, and game drive lines (rock alignments).

Just north of the Bear Trap Canyon, remains of a fur trapping era occupation site have been found, and it is likely that trappers utilized the wilderness area.

The area around Bear Trap Canyon began to be developed when the gold rush occurred in Virginia City and other southwestern Montana locations. The Madison Toll Bridge was built in the 1867 in Section 2, T3S, R1E, north of the canyon. This wooden structure was replaced in 1890 by another bridge whose pilings are still visible. In 1953 the present bridge was constructed.

The Red Bluff mining district with its stagecoach station is west of the canyon. It was an overnight stop on the Bozeman to Virginia City stage route. There were three large ranches in the vicinity of Bear Trap Canyon: Alexander Norris to the west, James McAllister along Meadow Creek to the south, and Charles Alceney's "Flying D" to the east.

The Madison River Improvement Company surveyed the canyon about 1900 for power generating plant sites. Three sites were located: (1) the present site of the dam, (2) the location of the new powerhouse, and (3) a site at the mouth of Bear Trap Creek. A dam and power station were in operation in 1906, and site 3 was tested in 1907 for geological suitability for a second dam. Some evidence of this testing is still visible along the trail south of the creek. In 1908, three employees of the company filed a claim on 160 acres of Section 34, T3S, R1E. Their patent was denied in 1915 for questionable validity. Plans for the second dam were stopped in the same year because of financial instability in Butte.

The three employees had built a road to Bear Trap Creek from Montana Highway 84; three cabins were built; and earth on the north bank of Bear Trap Creek was moved. Today, none of the cabins remain.

2. Assumptions

The Bear Trap Canyon appears to have been a long-term focus for human activity.

Without an assessment of the cultural significance of presently known sites and of portions of the area with a high likelihood of site occurrence, it will be difficult to manage and protect the resource.

Greater visitor use increases the probability that information contained in archeological and historical sites will be lost through vandalism.

C. Management Direction

1. Management Policies

Cultural resources in the Bear Trap Canyon will not be identified for the public.

Significant historic and prehistoric sites will be recommended to the National Register of Historic Places.

Archeological and historical sites will be protected from vandalism and inadvertent destruction.

2. Management Actions

The Bear Trap Archeological Protection Study will be completed by September 30, 1984. This study evaluates the presently known sites in the area for significance in terms of the National Register of Historic Places, serves as the basis for a potential National Register Historic District, and includes mitigative excavation and analysis of five sites (Butte DO Archeologist).

A low-water subsurface investigation of selected rapids will be completed to look for possible fur trade and gold mining era artifacts by September 30, 1986 (Butte DO Archeologist).

An investigation of the terrace areas will be conducted to look for presently unidentified archeologic sites by September 30, 1986 (Butte D.O. Archeologist).

In order to mitigate probable site damage occurring from development and increased use of the trail head areas, a subsurface investigation of site #255 will be completed by September 30, 1985 (Butte DO Archeologist).

The wilderness brochure will include a statement prohibiting the disturbing, injuring, or collecting of cultural materials. The brochure will be completed by September 30, 1984 (Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator).

INSECT, NOXIOUS PLANTS, AND FOREST DISEASE

A. Management Objectives

Management will allow for the natural role of noxious plants, insects, and forest diseases as an influence on plant succession and on the visual landscape. Noxious plant and insect infestations and forest diseases will be allowed to run a natural course except where such activity threatens adjacent resources.

B. Current Situation and Assumptions

1. Current Situation

Throughout time, the agents of disease, introduced vegetation, and insect infestations have acted to alter the landscape.

Infestations of the noxious weed spotted knapweed are presently found in the Bear Trap Wilderness. Another exotic, leafy spurge, is not a factor to date; but its presence is expected as it occurs in the surrounding area. Spotted knapweed is being controlled in the Red Mountain Campground downstream of Bear Trap through spot spraying and through the use of a biological control agent, the gall fly, which limits seed production of the weed. Canadian thistle is also found in the canyon in some locations.

No forest diseases have been recognized to date within the canyon.

The mountain pine beetle infestation which can cause the lodgepole pine mortality so noticeable in southwest Montana, has not yet touched the trees in Bear Trap, but it is probably just a matter of time before that occurs. The Spruce Budworm tree defoliator, however, does infest the canyon. This latter disease however does not cause widespread mortality.

Bear Trap Canyon could become a focal point for the spread of noxious weeds, insects and disease if no control measures are allowed.

2. Assumptions

Outbreaks of noxious plants have such potential for spread that occasional control will probably be necessary. More biological control agents will be available in the future.

C. Management Direction

1. Management Policy

Noxious plant infestations will be controlled on an as-needed basis by means that have the least adverse impact on the wilderness resource. Noxious plant suppression projects in Montana BLM wilderness will be approved by the State Director. The emphasis will be on biological control agents when available.

In order to prevent the ingress and spread of nonnative plants as well as to decrease the social and resource impacts of horse use in the area, horses and mules will not be allowed in Bear Trap Canyon, except during the fall hunting season.

Weeds will be controlled at trailheads by spraying and other control means.

2. Management Action

Trailhead information signs and brochures will warn visitors that the use of horses and mules is forbidden in the wilderness. In addition, information asking visitors not to introduce nonnative plant species will be included in these materials (Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator and Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner).

An inventory of noxious weed infestation sites will be conducted by September 30, 1985 (Dillon RA Range Staff).

The yearly inventory of forest diseases prepared by the Cooperative Forestry and Pest Management Division of Region One of the Forest Service will be monitored for incidence and spread of forest disease in the Bear Trap Canyon. Responsibility will lie with the Butte DO Forestry Program Leader to keep the Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator informed.

FIRE

A. Management Objectives

Fire will be used to reestablish and maintain a diversity of vegetative types and wildlife habitats in the area without endangering public safety or values outside the wilderness. Suppression techniques will be employed which result in the least amount of surface disturbance. The fire protection strategy will compliment the resource management objectives in the most cost effective manner.

B. Current Situation and Assumptions

1. Current Situation

Wildfires have occurred infrequently in the canyon, although fire scars are noticeable, including those of a 1953 fire about three miles from the take-out point. There have been two person-caused fires in the Bear Trap in the last ten years.

To date, fire suppression actions have been based on manual requirements to dispatch sufficient equipment and manpower to control the fire within the first burning period.

2. Assumptions

Prescribed fire is needed to reestablish and/or maintain the mosaic of ecological and successional vegetative types in the area.

As wilderness visitations increases, prevention actions will be designed to maintain or reduce the current level of person-caused fires.

C. Management Direction

1. Management Policy

Unscheduled ignitions will be managed according to the guidelines established in the Dillon Resource Area fire management plan and environmental assessment.

Prescribed fire will be planned through normal resource specialist activity programming.

Suppression actions will be accomplished with minimum use of motorized equipment.

2. Management Action

The Dillon Resource Area fire management plan and environmental assessment will be used to guide all fire actions within the Wilderness boundaries.

SEARCH AND RESCUE

A. Management Objectives

BLM will continue cooperating with the Madison County sheriff's office to coordinate search and rescue procedures and to provide for visitor safety.

B. Current Situation and Assumptions

1. Current Situation

According to the county sheriff, at least 7 people have died because of boating accidents in the Kitchen Sink rapids in the past 25 years. There have been a number of injuries attributable to boating as well as other activities in the canyon.

A number of factors make rescue operations difficult in the Bear Trap Canyon. The area is quite remote and human use is sporadic other than on weekends in the prime visitor season. This decreases the probability that an injured person would be found in a short period of time. Objective dangers in the canyon include three major rapids, one of which is probably the single most difficult rapid in the state, steep terrain, poison oak, rattlesnakes and bears. Radio communication can be extremely difficult. There are very few spots to land a helicopter in the canyon for evacuating injured visitors.

Present practice on search and rescue places BLM in a support and coordination role, with the Madison County sheriff having primary responsibility.

2. Assumptions

The need for search and rescue operations is likely to remain and possibly increase, depending on visitation in the wilderness.

Stationing a seasonal technician with white water rafting capability and proper equipment in the canyon would give BLM an onsite capability for search and rescue.

Better radio communication in the canyon will enhance BLM activities in general, but will be especially important during search and rescue operations.

C. Management Direction

1. Management Policies

Coordination with the Madison County Sheriff's office will be maintained for purposes of search and rescue operations, training, emergency equipment purchases, radio relay placements, etc.

Although the Madison County Sheriff will continue to have primary responsibility, the seasonal technician in the wilderness will initiate search and rescue operations in coordination with the Dillon Resource Area Office, when his proximity to the scene of the incident can save lives or expedite rescue.

If further support is needed, the Dillon Resource Area will be responsible for coordination with the Madison County Sheriff, Montana Power Company, Gallatin and Beaverhead national forests and local search and rescue organizations.

Better radio communications will be developed for the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness.

2. Management Actions

The seasonal ranger in the Bear Trap Canyon will be properly trained as to his role in search and rescue, first aid, helicopter evacuations and radio communications before the primary user season begins. (Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner and Butte D.O. Wilderness Coordinator).

A radio relay will be placed on the slopes of the canyon to aid in communication problems in the wilderness by September 30, 1985 (Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator and MSO Communications Specialist).

BLM representatives will meet with the Madison County Sheriff yearly to discuss search and rescue operations needs, purchase of equipment, further cooperation, etc. (Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator and Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner).

SCIENTIFIC STUDY

A. Management Objectives

Research will be permitted and encouraged as long as proposed projects are conducted in such a manner as to preserve the area's wilderness character and then further the management, scientific, educational, historical, and conservation purposes of the area.

B. Current Situation and Assumptions

1. Current Situation

The Bear Trap Canyon provides opportunities for scientific study and observation in a natural setting. However, as far as is known, no scientific investigation projects have been accomplished in the canyon.

2. Assumptions

Basic social and natural resource information is crucial to intelligent management decisions, and the development of such information pertinent to wilderness should be encouraged.

Answers to some administrative problems can be obtained only through systematic study and research.

C. Management Direction

1. Management Policy

Research that is wilderness dependent and compatible with the goals and objectives of this plan will be approved. Research activities that adversely affect the wilderness resource, limit the experience of users, or conflict with other wilderness objectives will not be approved.

A close cooperation with the Forest and Range Experiment Station and university researchers will be fostered as a means of resolving wilderness management problems, both social and resource based.

Data collected for management purposes, such as use figures and baseline ecological data, will be made available to scientists for research purposes.

2. Management Action

Develop and prioritize an applied Research Needs Plan by September 30, 1986 (Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator).

Maintain coordination with the Forest and Range Experiment Station and universities so that they will be aware of opportunities for research that the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness may offer (Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator).

If an appropriate research effort is proposed utilizing Bear Trap's resources, give encouragement and cooperative aid as administrative time, resources, and funding permit (Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator).

VEGETATION

A. Management Objectives

Vegetation will be managed to maintain the system of natural processes that governs the distribution of plant communities and to ensure that natural biotic communities remain undisturbed except by those natural processes.

B. Current Situation and Assumptions

1. Current Situation

Variations in microclimate, substrate, soils, slope aspect, moisture recovery, sunlight, and other factors have made possible a great variety of vegetation. North facing slopes are characterized by dense Douglas-fir forest. Secondary species include limber pine, lodgepole, and Englemann spruce. Undergrowth is minimal where the canopy density is high, although chokecherry and other shrubs can be quite dense in some north facing locations.

Widely scattered juniper, mountain mahogany, and serviceberry dominate the overstory on the dry slopes. Aspen stands can be found on moist slope sites, which may be a function of snow accumulation. Idaho fescue and sagebrush make up much of the understory. On

talus slopes and scree deposition areas, vegetation is sparse or nonexistent.

The bottom lands are characterized by a dense growth of bluebunch wheatgrass with scattered shrubs and western cottonwood. The cottonwood also creeps up the bottoms of the side drainages. Poison ivy flourishes on the rocky margins of the river and especially on the west facing slope at the north end of the canyon.

Although no threatened or endangered plant species have been identified to date in the Bear Trap, the white-margined phlox (*Phlox albomarginata*) does occur. This species has been identified as needing detailed investigation for possible inclusion in the National Inventory of Threatened and Endangered Species.

With the exception of very minimal permitted domestic livestock use at the southeast and west margins of the area and some cut stumps near the old cabin site at the mouth of Bear Trap Creek, the vegetative mosaic in the area reflects a natural environment unaltered by man. Naturally occurring wildfire scars are occasionally noticeable as are trampled areas in the vicinity of heavy use and camping zones. However, these are the only signs of vegetative alteration in the wilderness at present. Compaction areas appear to revegetate rapidly, probably as a function of soil loosening from the freeze-thaw cycle.

2. Assumptions

A natural vegetative mosaic containing all stages of ecological succession will contribute to the beauty and understanding of the natural environment.

Recreational impacts on vegetation through trampling, use of firewood, and human ignited fires will increase.

Livestock grazing will continue to amount to no more than incidental use.

Monitoring human impacts on vegetation will serve an important function in defining the Limits of Acceptable Change, identifying problem spots, and documenting visitor use.

C. Management Direction

1. Management Policy

Cutting of trees and vegetation for east side trail maintenance will be limited to the minimum necessary to allow use of the trail for its intended purpose and to reduce environmental impacts caused by such use.

Human impacts on riparian vegetation will be monitored on a regular basis using a replicable survey system, and results of the process will be maintained for future comparison as part of the LAC documentation.

Visitors will use only dead and down material for firewood and the cutting of green trees for tent poles, benches, bough beds, fishing pole supports, etc. will be forbidden. Visitors will be encouraged to use portable backpack stoves rather than open fires.

Existing livestock grazing will be continued under the present custodial basis pursuant to Section 4(d)(4) of the Wilderness Act and in House Report 96-1126. Preferred grazing areas will be monitored on an occasional basis to ensure overuse does not occur.

2. Management Action

A photo plot inventory of campsites and heavily used visitor areas will be used to monitor vegetative impacts by recreationists. Information from this inventory will be one of the elements utilized in the Limits of Acceptable Change process. The first monitoring will be completed by September 30, 1985 and yearly after that (Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner and Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator).

The wilderness brochure and trailhead information board will contain language prohibiting the cutting of green trees and restricting visitor use of fuel wood to dead and down (Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner and Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator).

Livestock grazing in the wilderness will be monitored as part of the normal monitoring of the custodial allotments. The Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator will be kept informed as to cattle numbers and preferred grazing sites (Dillon RA Range Staff and Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator).

FISH AND WILDLIFE

A. Management Objectives

Management will provide a natural distribution and abundance of existing and native species of fish and wildlife by allowing natural processes to shape habitat and interactions among species. Legal hunting and fishing will be carried out in a manner consistent with wilderness values, and state laws.

B. Current Situation and Assumptions

1. Current Situation

Bear Trap Canyon offers diverse wildlife habitats that provide optimum conditions for many wildlife species; thus, there is a large variety of wildlife in the area. Habitat diversity is due to abrupt changes in altitude, slope, and aspect and to the effects of a few small fires.

All wildlife is the property of the people of the State of Montana and the State Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks has responsibility for establishing and administering regulations. The BLM has responsibility for habitat management.

during the fall. Fishing is an extremely important and attractive recreational activity both from the bank and floating and continues nearly year-round.

The Madison River, which flows through the Bear Trap Canyon, is classified a blue ribbon trout stream by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, which indicates that this section of river is of national significance. Current fishing pressure is considered high, as documented by user surveys and well worn trails on both sides of the river.

Thermal pollution of the Madison's waters downstream of the Ennis Lake dam is the most immediate and significant threat to the fishery resource. The large, shallow body of water impounded by the dam acts as a solar heat collector and warms the incoming water 3-5 degrees F. during the 10-15 day period it takes water to move through the reservoir during the summer months. This heat, when added to heat generated by meteorological and hydrological conditions, produces a 10-12 degree F. increase in water temperature in the river. This problem is most significant in the wilderness area and becomes negligible downstream where the natural warming of the waters in summertime makes the influence of the upstream factors unimportant.

No rare or endangered fish or wildlife species have been identified in the canyon although habitat for the sensitive specie, osprey, does exist.

2. Assumptions

Fishing pressure is anticipated to increase within the canyon in the future. MDFWP will manage the fishery to address the impacts of fishing pressures as they evolve. Temporary closures of some stretches have been made for study purposes.

Bank fishing will also increase.

Some hunting will continue to occur within the wilderness.

C. Management Direction

1. Management Policies

Jurisdiction and responsibilities of the state agencies with respect to the protection and management of fish and wildlife are not changed by wilderness designation. BLM recommendations will be predicated on a demonstrable need for protection and maintenance of the wilderness resource. Hunting, fishing, and trapping will be permitted in accordance with state law and in a manner consistent with wilderness objectives under the same restrictions as other recreation use. Within the Madison Dam project boundary, Montana Power Company will control hunting activities.

Existing and native animal and plant species will be maintained. Special emphasis will be on the preservation of threatened or endangered species and their habitats if any are identified in the area.

Visitor actions that tend to alter the natural behavior of wildlife, such as the practice of leaving food or garbage that is later eaten by bears, will be discouraged through visitor education.

If a native wildlife species is eliminated in the canyon by human-influence, reintroduction of that species will be considered.

Research or cooperative studies will be encouraged to examine animal behavior and distribution relative to wilderness visitor activities and movement.

No wildlife population increase will be encouraged at the disadvantage of another species. Threatened and endangered species will receive special consideration.

Predators should be able to coexist with other wildlife species indigenous to the wilderness free from the unregulated interference of man.

2. Management Actions

Trapping and transplanting of indigenous wildlife species by the MDFWP will be subject to BLM wilderness policies and regulations regarding equipment use and transportation.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

A. Management Objectives

Information and user education will be designed to:

—make information about the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness available to all persons requesting it, but without advertising or promoting its use;

—divert use not dependent on the wilderness to alternative areas;

—divert users seeking an experience not available in this wilderness to a suitable area in another wilderness; and

—provide information that will minimize the impact on the resource and encourage compliance with restrictions.

—educate the wilderness users and promote the no-trace camping concept.

B. Current Situation and Assumptions

1. Current Situation

Designation of an area as wilderness generally increases public awareness and interest in that area. As recreational use increases, more interest is expressed and inquiries are received concerning the area and its management. Effective and timely information and education is a key management tool in gaining public acceptance and support for management objectives.

Much of the public is aware of the Bear Trap Canyon due to its prior designation as a primitive area. A brochure was published and has been available for several years.

When issuing permits for commercial floating, BLM personnel have emphasized the values of the canyon that they are trying to preserve, and the outfitters have been cooperative by passing this information along to their clients.

2. Assumptions

The public will desire informational brochures on the natural and cultural history and special features of the wilderness.

Especially important are contacts by wilderness rangers, which must be quality contacts. Careful personnel selection and training are necessary to insure that visitor contacts will enhance both the resource and the wilderness visit.

Improved compliance with regulations can be obtained by providing information regarding regulations and the reason for them instead of strictly hard line enforcement..

In order to be effective, maps and brochures must be clear and easily understood by people with little experience in reading them.

C. Management Direction

1. Management Policies

All BLM personnel having contact with the public regarding the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness (including wilderness specialists, maintenance crews, volunteers, clerks, and other personnel dispensing information and materials) will be informed of management goals and conditions within the wilderness. They will then be able to provide this information to prospective users, direct use not dependent upon the wilderness setting to alternative areas, encourage appropriate behavior by users, and increase user understanding and appreciation of wilderness.

Information and education (I&E) seeking visitor self-compliance with behavior restrictions will be a primary method for controlling the impact of use on the wilderness environment. All new maps, brochures, and other printed material will contain information pursuing the above stated I&E goals.

The wilderness brochure and other educational informative publications will be periodically revised to keep them up-to-date with wilderness management strategies and existing conditions.

The objective of all show-me trips, both agency and public, will be to increase the visitors' knowledge of wilderness management with specific emphasis directed toward the Bear Trap Canyon.

In general, publicity for the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness will be discouraged.

2. Management Actions

Publishers and authors will be asked to include a minimal impact message in publications that include the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness.

The Dillon R.A. Outdoor Recreation Planner will post current conditions of visitor use information, including all special management constraints at portals prior to normal period of use.

The Wilderness Coordinator and Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner will organize work parties of wilderness users to assist in approved trail maintenance, portal facility installation and maintenance, and wilderness maintenance work projects. Interpretive talks about wilderness philosophy, minimum impact camping, and the local history of the area will be included.

The Wilderness Coordinator will coordinate show-me-trips with all involved administrative units.

As an informed public is one of the best means of ensuring the protection of Bear Trap, the Wilderness Coordinator will prepare a brochure by September 30, 1984, outlining major values in the area and techniques for low impact use.

As the majority of users are and will continue to be from the Bozeman area, an outreach wilderness educational program in the schools, social organizations and wherever else requested will be developed by September 30, 1986. (Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator and Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner).

V. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCE

V. IMPLEMENTATION SEQUENCE

Target Date	Activity
Sept. 30, 1984	Complete the Bear Trap Archeological Protection Study by September 30, 1984. Butte DO Archeologist. (Cultural Resources, p. 21)
Sept. 30, 1984	Visitor use brochure including wilderness protection and use techniques finished by September 30, 1984. Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator. (Water, P. 19, Cultural Resources, P. 21, Insects, Noxious Plants, and Forest Diseases, P. 22, Information and Education, p. 27)
Sept. 30, 1984	Remove trash from around the old cabin site at mouth of Bear Trap Creek. Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner. (Recreation, p. 13)
Feb. 1, 1985	Prepare a draft supplemental document outlining allocation procedures for 25 additional commercial launches. Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner, Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator. (Commercial Use, p. 14.)
Yearly Sept. 30, 1985	Evaluate each outfitters equipment, safety procedures, adherence to permit stipulations, and level of public service at least three times during the floater season. Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner (Commercial Use, p. 15)
Yearly Sept. 30, 1985	Visitor use data will be collected with visitor register boxes, electric-eye counters, cameras, interviews, observation and by indirect means on a yearly basis. The exact mix of measurement techniques will be dependent on available personnel. Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner. (Recreation, p. 12)
Yearly Sept. 30, 1985	Vegetative monitoring will be conducted on a regular basis to keep track of recreational and recurrent impacts on streamside plant species and campsites. This monitoring will serve as part of the basis for setting Limits of Acceptable Change standards. Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner and Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator. (Vegetation, p. 24)
Sept. 30, 1985	Coordinate with MPC to institute a visitor advisory program utilizing a water level stadia rod and water flow information in a handout brochure at the put-in point to disseminate water flow information. Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator and Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner. (Water, p. 19)
Sept. 30, 1985	Warning sign placed at powerhouse to keep fishermen out of emergency overflow area in conjunction with MPC. Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner. (Signs, p. 18)
Sept. 30, 1985	Wilderness portal information sign boards and registration boxes and separate boundary signs will be erected at Northeast Trail portal and at the powerhouse floaters put-in. Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner. (Signs, p. 18)

Sept. 30, 1985	Block the west side trail's spur road to motorized vehicle access. Butte DO Operation Chief. (Trails, p. 20)
Sept. 30, 1985	Develop a Cooperative Management Agreement with Montana Power Company to define roles in the management of recreation both inside and outside the wilderness. Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator. (Recreation, p. 13).
Sept. 30, 1985	Conduct an inventory of noxious weed infestation sites. Dillon RA Range Staff. (Insects, Noxious Plants, and Forest Diseases, p. 22).
Sept. 30, 1985	In order to mitigate probable site damage occurring from development and increased use of the trailhead areas, complete a subsurface investigation of Site #255. Butte DO Archeologist. (Cultural Resources, p. 21).
Sept. 30, 1986	Initiate a Water Quality Monitoring Program to establish baseline water quality. Butte DO Hydrologist. (Water, p. 19).
Sept. 30, 1985	Apply for instream flow levels equivalent to MDFW&P's filings. Butte DO Hydrologist. (Water, p. 19).
Sept. 30, 1986	Develop and prioritize an applied "Research Needs Plan." Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator. (Scientific Study, p. 23).
Sept. 30, 1986	Conduct an investigation of the terrace areas for presently unidentified archeologic sites. Butte DO Archeologist. (Cultural Resources, p. 21).
Sept. 30, 1986	Complete a low water subsurface investigation of selected rapids for possible fur trade and gold mining era artifacts. Butte DO Archeologist. (Cultural Resources, p. 21).
Sept. 30, 1986	Develop an outreach wilderness education program for use in schools, social organizations, or wherever else requested. Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator and Dillon RA Outdoor Recreation Planner. (Information and Education, p.)

VI. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

Butte District Office **Dillon Resource Area**

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEAR TRAP CANYON WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT PLAN

July 1984

Madison County, Montana

Abstract

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and BLM Manual 8561-Wilderness Management Plans, an assessment has been made of the environmental consequences upon the wilderness resource and the human environment of selected management options. The result of this assessment was the conclusion that none of the management alternatives would result in significant environmental impacts.

For additional information please contact Jack A. McIntosh, District Manager, Butte District Office, P.O. Box 3388, Butte, Montana 59702 Telephone (406) 494-5059 or FTS 585-8059.

A. INTRODUCTION

This portion of the document summarizes and highlights the information required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to adequately consider and document the environmental consequences upon the wilderness resource and the human environment of several alternative methods of managing the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness.

The environmental impact statement which accompanied the 1980 Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness suitability report analyzed the environmental effects stemming from the decision of whether or not to manage the area according to the requirements of the wilderness act. This document addresses the effects on the wilderness environment of various management actions, all of which fall within the parameters of the wilderness act. Thus, the purpose and need of this environmental assessment is to aid in making a reasoned choice of the wilderness management options available.

B. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

Four alternatives are analyzed in this environmental assessment.

1. The Proposed Action

This alternative places primary emphasis on resource protection with secondary emphasis on recreation use. Natural and scenic values would be enhanced by minimal human manipulation of the environment.

Recreation use would be regulated but education would be the primary visitor management tool along with some specific limitations on use and stay limits.

2. No Action Alternative

No change would be made from the present level of management which reflects the guidance of the BLM Interim Management Policy. Natural and scenic values would be preserved at their present level. Recreation use would be regulated to maintain resource values with consideration of a variety of management tools to control use. Present situation is based on the 1980 Bear Trap Canyon Management Plan.

3. Recreational Use Enhancement Alternative

The focus of this alternative is the accommodation of recreationists needs and the need to serve large numbers of people. Human manipulation of the natural environment within the framework of what is permissible in the Wilderness Act would be allowable. Limitations on visitors would be less emphasized.

4. Resource Protection Emphasis Alternative

This alternative would reflect the more purist approach to wilderness management. Natural and scenic values as well as solitude opportunities would be emphasized and would have priority over most recreational uses. Visitor numbers would be regulated through a permit system.

C. DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

1. The Proposed Action

a. Recreation Opportunities

Under this alternative the area would be managed for day use. Commercial and noncommercial floater numbers would be allocated. No floater camping would be allowed. A three-day stay limit for bankside users would be instituted. The east side trail would be closed before the powerhouse to enhance visitor solitude and for visitor safety reasons. Historical outfitter use would be permitted. No new trails would be constructed; trails would receive only minimum maintenance. The west side trail would be deemphasized with no signing or bridge to cross Warm Springs Creek. A brochure to educate users in proper wilderness use and to channel use not dependent on Bear Trap Canyon elsewhere would be available. The area would be closed to horses and mountain bicycles as well as to motorized transport.

b. Developments

Facilities at access points would be designed to hold down long-term use in the wilderness. The south end put-in point would be designed to accommodate day use, increased safety for visitors, and decreased conflict with MPC. The north end trail emphasizes day use and accommodates overnight visitors away from trailhead. A toilet at Bear Trap Creek would be considered. Boundary signs would be placed at trailheads. Orientation, safety, and interpretive information would be posted at access points. Access roads would be maintained to minimal standards.

c. Monitoring and Use Supervision

LAC method would be used to flag increasing use impacts. Recreation use levels would be measured on a yearly basis. A user preference survey would be completed in 1984 and at five year intervals. A BLM seasonal position would be provided as well as a Wilderness Specialist in District Office.

d. Agency Cooperation

A search and rescue MOU would be developed with Madison County. A recreation management MOU would be developed with MPC and with MDFWP.

e. Resource Manipulation

Archaeologic investigations would be conducted. Noxious plants would be controlled by least impactive means. Wildfires would be suppressed if private property is threatened. Existing minimal grazing would be continued.

2. No Action Alternative

a. Recreation Opportunities

The area would be managed for day use. The carrying capacity would be set for all users. No commercial floater camping would be allowed. A 14-day stay limit carrying capacity would be established. Continuation of the closure of the east side trail at the powerhouse would be studied. Commercial floating outfitter permits would be limited to historical levels and reconsidered after 3 years. The construction of additional trails and trailhead facilities would be considered for the west side trail. A brochure to educate users in proper wilderness use would be available. Motorized equipment would be restricted; however, the area would be open to horses and bicycles.

b. Developments

The facility strategy would be the same as the proposed action. No toilet would be constructed at Bear Trap Creek. No boundary signs would be put up. Orientation safety and interpretive information would be posted at access points. Access roads would be maintained to minimal standards.

c. Monitoring and Use Supervision

The carrying capacity would be determined by 1984 but would be monitored as to results and effectiveness. Recreation use levels would be monitored through use of trail counters and registers. A cooperative user preference survey, as completed in 1981 with MDFW&P, would be repeated at five year intervals. No provision would be made for management personnel.

d. Agency Cooperation

A search and rescue activities would be closely completed with Madison County. A recreation management MOU would be completed with MPC.

e. Resource Manipulation

An archaeologic investigation would be conducted. No control of noxious plants would be attempted. Wildfires would be suppressed as soon as detected. Existing minimal grazing would be continued.

3. Recreation Use Enhancement Alternative

a. Recreation Opportunities

The area would be managed for day and multi-day use. No restriction on number of users, floater camping, or stay limits would be established. The east side trail would be open through the powerhouse. The need for greater commercial use would be considered. Trailhead facilities on the west side trail would be established. Additional trails in the area would be considered. An informational brochure would be offered to educate users in proper wilderness use and advertise opportunities available in the wilderness. The area would be closed to motorized equipment but horses and mountain bicycles would be allowed.

b. Developments

Facility design would stress ease of visitor access. The south end put-in point would be designed to accommodate day use, increase safety for visitors, and decrease conflict with MPC. Overnight facilities would be developed immediately adjacent to the north end trailhead. A toilet at Bear Trap Creek would be considered. Boundary signs would be placed at trailheads. General safety and interpretive information would be posted at access points. Access roads would be upgraded at both ends of the area.

c. Monitoring and Use Supervision

Recreation use levels would be measured on a yearly basis. No user preference survey would be conducted. Only use impacts and patterns of visitation away from popular areas would be monitored. BLM seasonal positions would be provided for as well as a River Manager.

d. Agency Cooperation

Interagency cooperation with MPC would be stressed to optimize recreation use.

e. Resource Manipulation

Archaeologic investigations would be conducted. No control of noxious plants would be implemented. Wildfires would be suppressed as soon as possible. Existing minimal grazing would be continued.

4. Resource Protection Emphasis Alternative

a. Recreation Opportunities

The area would be managed for day use. Carrying capacity would be set for all users, and a permit system instituted. No overnight camping would be allowed in the area; day use only. The east side trail would be closed at the powerhouse to enhance visitor solitude and for visitor safety reasons. Commercial uses would not be permitted. The west side trail would be physically closed. No further construction or maintenance of trails would occur. A brochure to educate users on proper use of wilderness and to channel use not dependent on Bear Trap Canyon elsewhere would be available. The area would be closed to horses and mountain bicycles as well as to motorized vehicles.

b. Developments

Facilities at access points would be designed to discourage use. The south end put-in points would be designed around a set number of parking places. After these are utilized further floater parties would be prohibited. The north end trailhead would be designed for day use. Overnight visitors would be accommodated as far as possible from the trailhead. No toilet would be constructed at Bear Trap Creek. Boundary signs would be

placed around the edge of the area to deter unauthorized activities. Access roads would be maintained to minimal standards.

c. Monitoring and Use Supervision

LAC method would be used to flag increasing use impacts. Recreation use levels would be measured on yearly basis. No user preference survey would be scheduled. No provision for management personnel would be provided.

d. Agency Cooperation

No interagency cooperation would occur.

e. Resource Manipulation

No archaeologic investigation would be conducted. No control of noxious weeds would occur. No wildfires would be suppressed unless private property is endangered. Existing minimal grazing would be continued.

D. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

The affected environment is described in the Current Situation portion of the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness Management Plan as well as in the General Management Situation section.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ON THE WILDERNESS RESOURCE OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

1. Natural Values

The impacts on naturalness are caused by several of the management actions listed in Table IV-1. The most significant of these are horse use, floater and bankside visitor camping, toilet facilities, and monitoring strategies. These activities contribute to soil compaction, vegetative alteration, sanitation problems, litter, and water quality concerns. The impacts of the four alternatives are compared in Table IV-2.

The Proposed Action would restrict horses, limit camping to a low level, provide a toilet at Bear Trap Creek, and closely monitor the impact indicators. This combination of actions would allow fewer impacts by decreasing the concentrated use of small areas. Activities such as vegetation utilization; and littering would be minimized. This alternative also addresses sanitation and water quality concerns by providing a toilet to control the distribution of human waste. The alternative provides for an effective means of monitoring use so visitation can be managed to reduce impacts.

The No Action alternative would allow for horses and pack stock, limited camping and visitor counts, but no Bear Trap Creek toilet. Impacts would therefore be greater than the Proposed Action, due primarily to the presence of horses.

The Recreation Use alternative would have significant impacts because it would allow unrestricted camping and the use of horses and pack stock. This increase in use would likely adversely affect sanitation and water quality even with the toilet facilities.

The Resource Protection alternative would limit impacts by prohibiting all camping and horses. However, the lack of toilet facilities would probably adversely affect sanitation and water quality, since day use visits would remain high.

Conclusion

The Proposed Action would provide for the fewest impacts to the naturalness of the Bear Trap Canyon.

2. Solitude

The impacts on solitude are caused by several of the management actions listed in Table IV-1. The most significant of these are floating use, camping, trail management, access roads to the trailhead, trailhead facilities, and visitor surveys. These actions contribute to the number of people using the area, to the type of visitor activities, and to visitor spatial distribution. The effects of the four alternatives on the numbers of people using the area and, therefore, solitude opportunities is shown in Table IV-2.

The Proposed Action would likely stimulate an estimated ten percent increase in visitor use each year primarily due to the increased publicity and interest generated by wilderness designation. This same increase would likewise be predicted for day use activity participation in camping, floating, and areas of use. The LAC monitoring process would be used to adjust visitor numbers, activities, or areas of use if deterioration of wilderness values occurred.

The No Action alternative would likely continue the current estimated four percent per year increase in people visiting the wilderness.

The Recreation Use alternative would likely allow an estimated 20 percent increase in visitation of the northern half of the wilderness and would likely increase use in the south half of the wilderness an estimated 50 percent per year. These levels are expected to level off within 5 years because of the small physical size and spatial limitations of the wilderness.

The effects of the Resource Protection alternative on visitor numbers, activities, and areas of use is estimated to be the same as the Proposed Action except that no overnight camping would be allowed.

Conclusions

Solitude in the Bear Trap is directly related both to the number of visitors per area and to their activities since there is little screening in the narrow canyon.

The Resource Protection alternative would best regulate visitors to insure a chance for solitude for many users of the wilderness. No camping would be allowed; floating would be only by permit; and the southeast access foot trail would be closed. However, no visitor

surveys would be done to monitor users perception of solitude. Therefore, long-term impacts on solitude may not be detected and mitigated.

The Proposed Action would provide for the enhancement of solitude while allowing limited camping. However, this alternative would use a visitor survey so experience could be monitored and activities affecting solitude better managed. In the long term, solitude may be improved due to the information gathered in the visitor surveys.

3. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The impacts of the various alternatives on primitive and unconfined recreation would affect activities such as walk-in recreation, camping, and floating more than other forms of recreation in the Bear Trap Canyon. These effects would be due to management activities that regulate recreation opportunities by restricting floating, trails, access, horses, and camping. The impacts of such restrictions are shown in Table IV-2.

The Proposed Action is predicted to stimulate a ten percent increase in participation in all forms of recreation activities appropriate to the Bear Trap. However, the alternative provides a means to monitor impacts of such use on the environment and lists several management options to reduce any recreation activities that adversely affect the environment.

The No Action alternative is predicted to stimulate a four percent increase in participation in recreation activities.

The Recreation Use alternative is likely to stimulate a 10 percent increase in participation in day use along with a 50 percent increase in floating and a 20 percent increase in camping use. The physical limitations of the area would tend to limit such visitation increases at the end of approximately 5 years.

The Resource Protection alternative is predicted to be similar to the Proposed Action except that no camping would be allowed.

Conclusion

The Recreation Use alternative allows the most people possible to enjoy the primitive and unconfined forms of recreation offered by the Bear Trap. However, the area would soon reach a saturation point beyond which visitors would likely experience a less satisfactory wilderness experience due to the press and proximity of other users.

4. Supplemental Values

Impacts to the ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical values would not be significant for any alternative (see Table IV-2). The number of visitors predicted by the Recreation Use alternative could be expected to have an adverse affect on wildlife populations. Wildlife would tend to move away from areas of high visitor use.

Conclusion

Supplemental values would best be protected in the Resource Protection, Proposed Action, and No Action alternative.

5. Social Impacts

The most significant social impact of the various alternatives is the chance of serious injury or death of visitors to the Bear Trap Wilderness. From past experience, there has been about one serious incident every two years. A serious incident is any that requires search and rescue.

The sources of danger are the white water rapids, poisonous reptiles, extreme weather conditions, and the existence of the emergency overflow chute for the power plant. The management activities that would mitigate these dangers are those that regulate trails, access, and the numbers of visitors exposed to the dangers and disseminate information concerning the hazards in the area. Table IV-2 compares predicted numbers of serious incidents for the alternative.

The Proposed Action discourages a significant increase in visitor numbers, closes the powerhouse trail, and allows a cooperative agreement for search and rescue aid. Two incidents every two-year period can be predicted due to an increase in use of the area.

The No Action alternative will likely continue at the one incident every two years rate.

The Recreation Use alternative would encourage increased visitor use, open the powerhouse trail, but would not initiate an agreement for search and rescue. Eight incidents every two-year period can be predicted.

The Resource Protection alternative restricts visitor use, closes the powerhouse trail, but would not initiate an agreement for search and rescue. The incident rate is predicted to be the same as for the Proposed Action.

Conclusions

The No Action alternative would result in the fewest number of safety and health incidents. The increase in visitation likely occurring with the other alternatives would result in more serious incidents.

6. Economic Impacts

None of the alternatives would significantly impact the economy of the local area; but a segment of the economy, outfitters and guides, would be affected by the decision (see Table IV-2). The Proposed Action, No Action, and Resource Protection alternatives restrict the number of commercial operators and their trips. The Recreation Use alternative would consider an increase in commercial operations.

Conclusion

The Recreation Use alternative best serves all segments of the economy. However, as the other three alternatives are not decreasing existing commercial activity, there would be no effect on the area's present economy, just on the potential profits of outfitters not presently permitted.

7. Cumulative Impacts

The cumulative impacts of the Recreation Use alternative is predicted to somewhat alter the wilderness character of the Bear Trap both in the short term and long term. Unrestricted visitor use of the narrow canyon without any monitoring of impacts would lead to consequences of a greater magnitude than a simple additive effect.

8. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

Under the alternatives proposed, the existing natural character of the Bear Trap Canyon would be maintained at various levels all of which would meet or exceed the section 3(c) definition of the 1964 Wilderness Act. No irreversible or irretrievable commitments of wilderness resources is predicted under any alternative.

F. LIST OF AGENCIES AND INDIVIDUALS CONSULTED

Copies of this document were sent to the following agencies, organizations, and businesses for their review. Copies were also sent to about 400 individuals from a mailing list of 2,500 who indicated on a mail-in card that they desired a copy of the document.

Federal Agencies

Federal Highway Administration
Department of Agriculture
  Agricultural Research Service
  Soil Conservation Service
  U.S. Forest Service
U.S. Bureau of Mines
Department of the Interior
  National Park Service
  U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
  Bureau of Reclamation
  Office of Library Services
  Bonneville Power Administration
Environmental Protection Agency
U.S. Air Force

Montana Congressional Delegation

Office of Senator Baucus
Office of Senator Melcher
Office of Congressman Marlenee
Office of Congressman Williams

State of Montana

Montana State University
Conservation Commission
Montana College of Mineral Science and Technology
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Environmental Quality Council
Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Office of Governor
Office of the Lieutenant Governor
University of Montana
Department of State Lands
Eastern Montana College
Bureau of Mines and Geology
Department of Agriculture
Water Quality Bureau
Western Montana College
Department of Livestock

Local Governments

Gallatin County Commissioner
Butte-Silver Bow Planning Department
Powell County Planning Department
Madison County Planning Board
Public libraries in several counties

Businesses

Kerr McGee Corporation
Louisiana-Pacific Corporation
Westech
Marathon Oil Co.
Hamilton Brothers Oil Co.
Butler Development Company
Montana Power Company
Exxon Minerals Company
Natural Gas Corporation of California
Plum Creek Lumber Company
Cyprus Industrial Minerals Company
Sun Exploration and Production Company
Texaco Incorporated
G.C.M. Services
Noranda Exploration, Incorporated
Leonard Resource
Santa Fe Energy Company
J.R. Simplott Company
Minerals Exploration Coalition
Petroleum Information
Stoltze Conner Lumber Company
El Paso Exploration Corporation
Pioneer Production Corporation
Texas Oil and Gas Corporation
Exxon Coal Resource USA, Incorporated
Sohio Petroleum Company
Coeur Exploration
Texas Gas Exploration Corporation
Celsius Energy Company
Resource Concepts Inc.
Asarco Northwest Exploration
Glacier Park Company
Raymond T. Duncan Oil Properties
Pfizen, Incorporated
Hughes Mining Company

Montana Petroleum Association
Golden Sunlight Mines
Amoco Production Company
Placid Oil Company
Shell Western E&P
Consolidation Coal Company
True Oil Company
On Line Exploration Service
Union Moly Corp., Incorporated
National Center for Appropriate Technology
Idaho Stud Mill

Organizations

American Mining Congress
Western Forest Industries Association
Western Environmental Trade Association
Fishing and Floating Outfitters Association of Montana
Montana Association of State Grazing Districts
Missouri River Fly Fishers
Mountaineers
Montana Historical Society
California Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs
Society for Range Management
Montana 4 X 4 Association
Marysville Pioneer Club
Boulder River Sportsmans Club
American Motorcyclist Association
Bonneville Sportsman Association
Montana Trapshooters
Great Falls Snowmobiles Incorporated
Montana Bowhunters Association
West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce
Helena Minerals Society
Townsend Rotary Club
Cascade County Four Wheelers
Upper Yellowstone Sno Club
Billings Motorcycle Club
Montana Chapter Sierra Club
Five Valleys Audubon Society
Wildlife-Wildlands Institute
Sierra Club
Montana Environmental Information Center
Idaho Alpine Club
Hill County Wildlife Association
The Wilderness Society
American Wilderness Alliance
Montana Wildlife Fund
Montana Audubon Council
Natural Resources Defense Council
Montana Trappers Association
Montana Public Lands Council
Montana Wilderness Association
Historical Research Association
The Nature Conservancy
Wildlands and Resource Association
Defenders of Wildlife
Capital Conservation Club
Izaak Walton League
Rocky Mountain Front Advisory Council

VII. COST ESTIMATES

VII. COST ESTIMATES

Implementing all the on-the-ground actions in this plan is dependent on the existence of a 6-month wilderness specialist (temp.) position. The coordination and planning functions of Bear Trap Canyon wilderness management will be shared between the Dillon Resource Area Outdoor Recreation Planner and the Butte District Wilderness Coordinator. Costs for travel, transportation, equipment and supplies are an estimated yearly average.

Yearly Costs of Implementing Plan

Wilderness Specialist (temp.)	6 work months
Dillon RA Outdoor Rec. Planner	3 work months
Butte DO Wilderness Coordinator	2 work months
Managerial and Secretarial	3 work months

Total Personnel Costs 13 wm x $2, 500 estimated Work Month Cost = $32,500

Estimated costs for travel, transportation, equipment and supplies = $10,000

Total costs per year to implement plan = $42,500

VIII. RECOMMENDATION AND APPROVAL SHEET

VIII. RECOMMENDATION AND APPROVAL SHEET

Recommended by:

Team Leader, Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness Management Plan

Recommended by:

Area Manager, Dillon Resource Area, November, 1984

Recommended by:

District Manager, Butte District Office, November, 1984

Recommended by:

State Director, Montana State Office, November, 1984

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

EXCERPTS FROM THE 1981 BEAR TRAP CANYON RECREATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

The following material is referenced from the 1981 Bear Trap Canyon Recreation Management Plan and comprises the Management Direction/Actions for BLM lands downstream of Ennis Lake. It places the wilderness area in context with recreation management of the rest of the canyon.

1. Determine the recreation carrying capacity of Bear Trap Canyon. Provide for periodic reevaluation.

a. Cooperatively conduct a user preference survey with Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks in 1981. Follow up surveys will be conducted in subsequent years, normally at five year intervals.

b. Monitor recreation impacts on soils, water, and vegetation, particularly riparian and ground cover.

c. Annually monitor levels of recreation use through use of trail registers and counters beginning in 1981.

d. Establish recreation carrying capacity by 1984. Consider levels of use of each activity, visitor preferences, need for commercial services, physical impacts of recreation activities, limitations of the area in terms of size and available access, and the need to preserve a primitive environment. Analyze and revise carrying capacity at five-year intervals, or as needed.

2. After Bear Trap carrying capacity is established, maintain recreation use within established limits primarily through measures such as public information and education encouraging "no trace" and off-season use, and management of trails and access roads to maintain solitude. Initiate this type of management immediately to limit use impacts.

Consider use of direct restrictions such as limits on party size, permit requirements, camping restrictions, designating specific use areas, and equipment restrictions (e.g., use of camp stoves rather than open fires) only if the above methods are not sufficient, or if resource/use conflicts are considered imminent.

a. Identify sites degraded from overuse. Mitigate degradation by public information (personal contact, trailhead information), physical site alteration (e.g., removing fire rings or other improvements), or temporary site restoration notices at trailheads and/or affected sites. Party size limits and permits will be utilized only if above methods are insufficient.

b. Manage trailheads and interior access to distribute use while maintaining opportunities for solitude in the more remote areas of the canyon.

In each of the following cases, tradeoffs between these two objectives, distributing use versus maintaining solitude in remote areas, must be evaluated in light of carrying capacity decisions.

(1) Consider additional trail development.

(2) Consider establishing a Warm Springs Creek trailhead (signing trail maintenance).

(3) Consider trail access from the south end of the area, at the Madison powerhouse.

3. Manage access points for primitive recreation to minimize use conflicts at access points. Improve recreation opportunities, scenic quality, and resource condition by providing facilities as necessary.

a. At the existing north trailhead, provide parking, toilet, and visitor information and education facilities. Erect vehicle barriers at parking area and trailhead. Close the trailhead to overnight camping when recommended alternative sites are developed on the alluvial flat 1/2 mile north of the trailhead. Maintain the access road only to an absolute minimum standard for two-wheel drive vehicles under normal weather conditions.

b. Acquire the private land at the Warm Springs Creek recreation site through a land exchange or fee title acquisition. In the interim, establish a cooperative agreement, or some other type of agreement, with the landowner which provides BLM with authority to manage the area. Manage the area only for day use activities and revegetate some roads, gravel an access road, and install vehicle barriers to mitigate the impacts of multiple roads. Construct a boat launch site and toilet facilities. Consider establishing a trailhead and providing visitor information.

4. Immediately pursue an initial cooperative agreement with MPC which would provide BLM with the authority to manage and control guides and outfitters (hunting) at the Barn Creek site, and floating outfitters at the powerhouse launch site.

a. At the Barn Creek Launch Site, limit number of outfitters permitted to use the area to four. Require use permits for outfitters using the trailhead and facilities. Coordinate permits with appropriate Forest Service offices. Restrict outfitter use to day use only. Monitor total use (commercial and noncommercial) and need for commercial services to determine if use should be further managed.

b. At the Powerhouse Launch Site, coordinate launch site requirements for vehicle use, parking, and length of time at the put-in with MPC in order to minimize conflict with company activity and with other floaters. As a minimum, require all floaters to expedite boat and equipment unloading at the put-in, and then to immediately park any vehicles at the Falls Creek or Barn Creek sites, or exit the canyon area. Consider use conflicts and safety problems in regard to any decision to limit or control the number of floaters.

Through visitor information and education, promote a cooperative attitude on the part of recreationists. Post information and recommendations for equipment and experience at the boat launch site. The final decision of floating or not floating will be the responsibility of the launching party. Install a float register at the launch site and request all parties to sign in. Establish a pack-in, pack-out policy for all floaters.

c. Maintain commercial river running use of Bear Trap Canyon at existing levels due to the potential for dramatically increased use and impacts on wilderness characteristics. Limits will apply on an interim basis for a maximum study period of three years. After the study period, commercial use limits will be re-evaluated in light of total recreation carrying capacity, need for commercial service, and an equitable allocation between commercial and noncommercial floaters.[1] While it is recommended that this action be included in the proposed agreement with MPC, it is not dependent on such an agreement. This proposed action is based on the need to preserve primitive qualities in the river corridor, and on the fact that it is reasonable to assume outfitters will use public lands at some point in the nine-mile float.

(1) Initially define and allocate allowable commercial river use on the basis of historical use. Historical users are those that had documented commercial use, other than training trips, before July 31, 1980. Special Recreation Use Permits will be issued only to the three outfitters qualifying under this provision, for a total of 52 launches allocated between the three permittees based on past use. Once an outfitter qualifies for a permit, his allowable use is defined on the basis of his greatest use in any single season during the three-year period 1978-1980. The actual permitted use will be addressed on each outfitter's permit. Opportunities for training trips for permitted outfitters and their river guides will be provided.

(2) Limit commercial river use to one launch, by only one outfitter, on any single day, with a maximum of two boats per launch, and a maximum party size of eight, including both clients and guides, with no overnight camping permitted. These limits are based on past use patterns and may be modified when carrying capacity is determined. Exceptions to boat and party size must be expressly authorized in writing.

(3) Schedule allowable commercial river use on an advance reservation-approved schedule basis. Scheduling requirements will become part of the outfitter permit. In the event it becomes necessary to limit noncommercial use in the future, a reservation system would be used. Allocation between commercial and noncommercial sectors would be determined at the time the decision was made to limit noncommercial use.

(4) If new permittees are chosen, they will be chosen on the basis of experience, past performance, references, equipment, and all facets of the applicant's operation.

(5) Specify safety equipment and procedures for river outfitters on Special Recreation Use Permits. Perform periodic compliance inspections at launch site.

(6) Supply adequate staff to enforce commercial use restrictions, inspect outfitter equipment, provide river information through visitor contact, and advise private floaters on equipment needs. New outfitter restrictions should be enforced closely to prevent unpermitted outfitting.

(7) Evaluate commercial uses other than river running on a case-by-case basis. Permit no outfitter camps or other commercial overnight use in the entire river corridor.

5. Within a period of one year, beginning with the date this plan is approved, pursue completion of a new or amended cooperative agreement with MPC which would provide BLM with the authority to manage all recreation use in the Upper Bear Trap (MPC project lands). During this time period, discussions would be held to determine the types of recreation facilities needed, and to mutually agree on the funding responsibilities of each party. As a beginning basis for such discussions, the following recommendations are offered.

a. Restrict the Upper Bear Trap Canyon to day use activities only. A "pack it in, pack it out" garbage policy would be established for the entire area.

b. Further evaluate the need to restrict trapping and the use of firearms in the MPC project area. Campfires would be restricted, with the exception that such use would be allowed at the Barn Creek site during hunting season, and then only if no fire danger existed.

c. At the Barn Creek Site, provide minimal toilet, parking, and picnic facilities.

d. At the Barn Creek Trailhead, provide minimal stock facilities, which would include an unloading ramp, hitch rail, and enlarged parking area. Limit stock loading/holding to the designated area, day use only.

e. At the Fall Creek Site, develop minimal facilities: toilet, one or two picnic tables, and parking area. Site and facilities would be designed to provide for staging area use when required by MPC.

f. At the Powerhouse Launch Site, provide stairs or some type of improved launch access, and a launch pad, both designed to expedite launching activities and reduce safety problems. Again, vehicles would be required to park at Falls Creek or Barn Creek sites, or exit the canyon area.

g. At the Powerhouse Trail Access, utilize all of the planning considerations provided in this document, and data provided by the BLM/MDFW&P user survey to be completed in the summer of 1981 to determine whether the trailhead should be opened. If the decision is to retain the closure, gain public acceptance and compliance through joint news articles, etc. If the decision is to open the trailhead, construct the footbridge and chainlink face as previously discussed, and request MDFW&P to restrict fishing activities in the subject area through their regulatory authority.

h. Through signing and public contact, encourage recreationists not to block the access road and to park vehicles only at the Barn Creek or Fall Creek sites. If such voluntary efforts are not successful, parking at the two sites would be mandatory, and appropriate signing and on-the-ground enforcement would be necessary.

6. Determine the feasibility and costs of constructing and maintaining a new alignment for the Barn Creek Trail around private land. If necessary, pursue the possibility of gaining a trail easement across the private land. In the interim, cooperate with the landowner in keeping the trail open on a voluntary basis.

7. Manage the remaining Bear Trap Canyon Roadside Recreation and ISA Lands as follows:

a. On the west side of the bridge south of Bear Trap, seek a land exchange with the Montana State Highway Department. In the interim, pursue a cooperative agreement to phase out the gravel storage area, relocate the gravel piles to another suitable location, and reclaim the area. If a land exchange can be accomplished, establish one to three day use areas, based on further site analysis. At each site, consider the following facilities in site design: vehicle barriers, toilets, road and parking area improvements, and picnic tables. Establish a "pack it in—pack it out" garbage policy, and manage primarily for undeveloped and semideveloped day use.

b. On the west side of the bridge north of the Bear Trap and based on site analysis, establish two semideveloped areas primarily for camping in a natural setting. Consider the following facilities in site design: toilets, tables, vehicle barriers, minimal access road improvement, fire rings, and livestock exclosures (if necessary). Limit number of improvements to the minimum necessary, and disperse individual sites for privacy in desirable camp locations. Establish a "pack it in—pack it out" garbage policy.

c. On the east side of the bridge north of the Bear Trap, relocate Red Mountain Campground to the alluvial flat one-quarter mile north of the highway bridge. Locate the developed campground behind the small rise adjacent to the highway for privacy and windbreak. Site design will provide for site dispersal, opportunities for tent and vehicle camping of various group sizes, and maximum screening from the sites and sounds of the highway. Consider landscaping with trees, type of access, and facilities (garbage, toilets, water, tables, and fire rings) in site design.

d. At the Red Mountain Recreation Area, relocate the campground across the highway as described in c. above. Maintain a small, day use site near the river based on a site design. Consider leaving tables along river, and a toilet and water pump at the site. A "pack it in—pack it out" garbage policy would be established.

e. Along the Bear Trap Access Road Corridor, manage the area primarily for day use, but continue to allow camping except at the Bear Trap Northern Trailhead and along the narrow road corridor against the river. Provide a small, semideveloped camp area in the alluvial flat one-half mile north of the trailhead. Consider access road improvement, a toilet, and minimal campsite improvement in the design. Again, a "pack in—pack out" garbage policy would be imposed.

8. Provide for visitor protection. Coordinate safety procedures and develop a search and rescue plan with the Madison County Sheriff's Department; Montana Power Company; Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks; and the Forest Service.

9. Continue the existing motorized equipment restrictions in the Bear Trap Canyon ISA. The former primitive area remains closed to all motorized equipment. Outside the former primitive area, prohibit use of wheeled vehicles on the Barn Creek Trail, effective as of the scheduled travel plan revision in 1982. This closure does not apply to the lower river area, including the Bear Trap access road, or to the Montana Power access road. In addition, install a vehicle barrier on the spur trail into the canyon on the west side to prevent motorized vehicle traffic in the closed area.

10. Prohibit new road development on public lands within a 1/4 mile corridor on each side of the Madison River unless required to provide for public recreational opportunities. Prohibit all road development in Bear Trap Canyon ISA.

11. Coordinate with Beaverhead and Gallatin National Forests to ensure compatible uses on Forest Service lands in the canyon.

12. Prohibit organized competitive events in Segments 1 and 2. Require permits for events in Segment 3, Lower Bear Trap.

13. Three options were considered for the Bear Trap cabin when it becomes vacant: removing it entirely, removing the roof to make it uninhabitable, or maintaining it for shelter and administrative purposes.

First, removing the cabin entirely would return the area to a natural condition, open up a prime camping area, and eliminate a possible attractive nuisance management problem with trespass occupancy. Second, rendering it uninhabitable would eliminate the attractive nuisance problem but leave the structure intact for historical flavor and human interest. Third, maintaining it would retain its value for historical flavor, as an emergency shelter, and as a back-country administrative site. Considering these factors and the results of public comment on the Draft Bear Trap Plan, Option 3, maintaining the cabin, has been accepted. While maintaining the cabin, BLM will remove unnecessary facilities and make the cabin as unobtrusive as possible.

14. Provide interpretation of area features for visitor interest and to encourage preservation of unique features. Publish a floating and information brochure for distribution to the public.

[1]Commercial use is recreational use of the public lands for business or financial gain. When any permittee, employee or agent of a permittee, operator, or participant makes or attempts to make a profit, salary, increase his business or financial standing, or supports, in any part, other programs or activities from amounts received from or for services rendered to customers or participants in the permitted activity, as a result of having the special recreation permit, the use will be considered commercial. The collection by a permittee or his agent of any fee, charge, or other compensation which is not strictly a sharing of, or is in excess of, actual expenses incurred for the purposes of the activity or use shall make the activity or use commercial. See *Montana Bureau of Land Management Special Recreation Permit Policy for Outfitters and Guides*, and Code of Federal Regulations, Subpart 8372.0-5.

APPENDIX II

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS FOR THE BEAR TRAP CANYON WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT PLAN

On January 17, 1984, the five member Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness Committee was convened to comment on a list of issues which included most of the problems to be addressed in the management plan. One member of the Advisory Committee who could not make the meeting was interviewed separately concerning the issues on February 14, 1984.

The Advisory Committee and other key individuals and agency officials were sent an in-house draft of this document on March 19 for their review and comment. Advisory Committee members were expected to disseminate appropriate portions of the document for comment to their constituency.

After redrafting to meet the concerns of the reviewers, copies of the printed draft were sent to members of the public who had indicated their interest in a public interest inquiry card mailing and to a standard mailing list in July. The public at large was informed that copies of the draft were available through public notice in local newspapers.

Two public open houses were held on August 6 in Bozeman and on August 7 in Ennis.

Due to public interest in the issues the normal 45-day comment period was extended so that the final date for public input was October 12, 1984.

Due to public comment and in-house review, portions of the draft document were revised resulting in this final management plan.

APPENDIX III

LIST OF PLAN PARTICIPANTS

Preparers	**Speciality**
Darrell McDaniel	Outdoor Recreation Planner
Bruce Botsford	Outdoor Recreation Planner
Phillip A. Gezon	Outdoor Recreation Planner
Mark Koski	Visual Information Specialist
Carole Mackin	Editor, Environmental Coordinator
Millard Hulse	Editor
Reviewers	
Robert Lund	Outdoor Recreation Planner, MSO
David Porter	Outdoor Recreation Planner, WO

APPENDIX IV

PLAN MONITORING AND REVISION PROCEDURES

A. MONITORING

As the interaction of visitors, natural physical forces, and the wilderness is always changing; an important goal for long-term protection of the Bear Trap Canyon focuses on the monitoring process. Monitoring identifies elements of the natural environment that are varying from natural limits, documents them, and serves as a red flag for management action, either on a site-specific basis or as an impetus to revising the management plan. Monitoring also provides information that becomes part of the wilderness data base and that will be incorporated in the next wilderness management plan revision. Monitoring inventory needs include water, vegetation, fire, fish and wildlife, cultural and historic resources, trails, access roads and parking areas, portal facilities, recreation activities, commercial operators, and signs.

Water. Water quality and temperature sampling will be ongoing.

Vegetation. Cattle species and utilization areas will be monitored within the wilderness. Areas of nonnative plant species will be mapped, and spread monitored. Any trespass activity by recreational livestock will be noted.

Fire. Constraints to natural fire, such as high-density use sites and high use travel zones, will be inventoried.

Fish and Wildlife. Fishing success and species harvested will be monitored within the Bear Trap Canyon. Wildlife sightings and locations, especially threatened and endangered species sightings, will be noted.

Cultural and Historic Resources. Identified sites will be monitored for signs of vandalism. Cultural resources inventory will be continued in the canyon.

Trails. Condition of trails and degree of use will be monitored.

Access Roads and Parking Areas. A record of numbers of vehicles, license plate county and state affiliations, and camping practices will be maintained at the portal areas. Condition of access roads will be monitored.

Portal Facilities. Condition of existing portal facilities will be noted. Sign-in compliance will be monitored.

Recreation. Estimates of use, both by livestock and river users, will be updated. Camping areas, heavily used bankside areas, side trails etc. will be monitored for signs of resource impacts. Visitors will be interviewed on a periodic basis to ensure that users perceptions of solitude continue to fall within the accepted range for wilderness. Trash and sanitation problems developing especially at heavily used sites such as the Bear Trap Creek areas, will be monitored.

Commercial. Outfitter lunch stops, put-in points, and general operations will be monitored to ensure sanitation, safety, and procedure stipulations are properly followed.

Signs. Condition of and need for existing signs will be monitored.

B. REVISION

As this is intended to be a working document, a copy in a 3-ring loose leaf binder will function as a base for day-to-day management. This may be updated or minor revisions made when needed. These should be written in, dated, and initialed. At 5-year intervals, the plan should be evaluated, assessing it against the existing condition of the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness. This plan has been prepared for a 10-year planning time frame. It is envisioned that only the following would indicate total revision: a massive increase in visitation, a major change in the environment (such as a widespread wildfire or infestation of forest insects or disease), or a cumulative increase in visitor-caused resource impacts that indicates more restrictive measures are needed.

APPENDIX V

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APPENDIX VI

TEXT OF LEGISLATION ESTABLISHING THE WILDERNESS

Public Law 98-140
98th Congress

An Act

To establish the Lee Metcalf Wilderness and Management Area in the State of Montana, and for other purposes.

Oct. 31, 1983
[S. 96]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the "Lee Metcalf Wilderness and Management Act of 1983".

Lee Metcalf Wilderness and Management Act of 1983.

DESIGNATION AND MANAGEMENT OF LEE METCALF WILDERNESS AND MANAGEMENT AREA

SEC. 2. (a) In furtherance of the purposes of the Wilderness Act (78 Stat. 890; 16 U.S.C. 1131), certain lands within the Beaverhead and Gallatin National Forests and certain lands in the Dillon Resource Area, Montana, administered by the Bureau of Land Management which comprise approximately two hundred and fifty-nine thousand acres as generally depicted as the "Lee Metcalf Wilderness" on a map entitled "Lee Metcalf Wilderness—Proposed", and dated October 1983 are hereby designated as wilderness and shall be known as the Lee Metcalf Wilderness.

16 USC 1132 note.
16 USC 1131 note.

(b) Subject to valid existing rights, the Lee Metcalf Wilderness as designated by this Act shall be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture, hereafter referred to as "the Secretary", in accordance with the Wilderness Act governing areas designated by that Act as wilderness: *Provided,* That any reference in such provisions to the effective date of the Wilderness Act shall be deemed to be a reference to the effective date of this Act: *Provided further,* That the Bear Trap Canyon portion of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness shall be administered by the Secretary of the Interior.

Administration of lands.

16 USC 1131 note.

(c) The Congress finds that certain lands within the Gallatin National Forest near Monument Mountain have important recreational and wildlife values, including critical grizzly bear and elk habitat. In order to conserve and protect these values, the area lying adjacent to the Monument Mountain and Taylor-Hilgard units of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness as designated by this Act and comprising approximately thirty-eight thousand acres, as generally depicted on the map entitled "Lee Metcalf Wilderness—Proposed", dated October 1983, shall be managed to protect the wildlife and recreational values of these lands and shall be hereby withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining laws and from disposition under all laws pertaining to mineral leasing and geothermal leasing, and all amendments thereto. The area shall further be administered by the Secretary of Agriculture to maintain presently existing wilderness character, with no commercial timber harvest nor additional road construction permitted. The Secretary shall permit continued use of the area by motorized equipment only for activities associated with existing levels of livestock grazing, administrative purposes (including snowmobile trail maintenance) and for snowmobiling during periods of adequate snow cover but only where such

Motorized equipment activities.

31-139 O - 83 (141)

uses are compatible with the protection and propagation of wildlife within the area: *Provided*, That the Secretary may, in his discretion, also permit limited motor vehicle access by individuals and others within the area where such access is compatible with the protection and propagation of wildlife and where such access was established prior to the date of enactment of this Act. Management direction for the area that recognizes these values shall be included in the forest plan developed for the Gallatin National Forest in accordance with section 6 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 as amended by the National Forest Management Act of 1976.

Forest plan.

16 USC 1604.
16 USC 1600 note.

DESIGNATION AND MANAGEMENT OF CERTAIN NATIONAL FOREST LANDS IN THE STATE OF MONTANA

Studies and initial plans.

SEC. 3. (a) The Congress hereby determines and directs that—

(1) the areas listed in subsection (b) of this section have been adequately studied for wilderness pursuant to Public Law 95-150 or in the RARE II Final Environmental Statement (dated January 1979);

16 USC 1132 note.

(2) such studies shall constitute an adequate consideration of the suitability of such lands for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System and the Department of Agriculture shall not be required to review the wilderness option for such areas prior to revision of the initial plans required for such lands by the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 as amended by the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-588) and in no case prior to the date established by law for completion of the initial planning cycle;

16 USC 1600 note.

(3) such areas need not be managed, unless otherwise specified in this Act, for the purposes of protecting their suitability for wilderness designation pending revision of the initial plans.

Wilderness-studied areas.

(b) The areas covered by subsection (a) of this section are as follows:

(1) the Mount Henry Wilderness Study Area as designated by Public Law 95-150;

16 USC 1132 note.

(2) those portions of the Taylor-Hilgard Wilderness Study Area as designated by Public Law 95-150 but not designated as wilderness by this Act;

(3) certain lands on the Gallatin National Forest and Beaverhead National Forest identified as area 1549 in the Forest Service Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (II) Final Environmental Statement, Executive Communication Numbered 1504, May 3, 1979, not designated as wilderness by this Act;

(4) certain lands on the Custer National Forest known as the proposed Tongue River Breaks Wilderness, which comprise approximately sixteen thousand five hundred acres, as identified in Executive Communication Numbered 1504, Ninety-sixth Congress (House Document Numbered 96-119).

(c)(1) The lands described in subsection (c)(2) of this section have been adequately studied for wilderness pursuant to section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (Public Law 94-579) and are no longer subject to the requirement of section 603(c) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act pertaining to management in a manner that does not impair suitability for preservation as wilderness.

43 USC 1782.

(2) The lands covered by subsection (c)(1) of this section are as follows: Wilderness-studied areas.

(A) certain lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management in the Powder River Resource Area, Montana, identified as area numbered 736, Tongue River Breaks Contiguity, comprising approximately two thousand acres as described in the "Final Decision Montana Wilderness Inventory" published November 1980 by the Bureau of Land Management;

(B) certain lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management in the Dillon Resource Area, Montana, identified as area numbered MT-076-079 "Madison Tack-Ons" comprising approximately one thousand five hundred acres, as described in the "Final Decision Montana Overthrust Belt Wilderness Inventory" published by the Bureau of Land Management, not otherwise designated as wilderness by this Act; and

(C) certain lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management known as "Bear Trap Canyon Study Area", Madison County, Montana, as described in "Draft Suitability and Environmental Impact Statement for Wilderness Designation of Bear Trap Canyon Instant Study Area" published April 1980 by the Bureau of Land Management, not otherwise designated as wilderness by this Act.

(d) The boundary of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness, Montana, as designated by Public Law 95-249, is hereby modified to exclude from the wilderness approximately forty acres in the West Fork of Mill Creek and approximately twenty-seven acres in the Passage Creek drainage as depicted on a map entitled "Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness-West Fork Mill Creek and Passage Creek Deletions", dated August 1983. 16 USC 1132 note.

(e) The boundary of the UL Bend Wilderness, Montana, as designated by Public Law 94-557 is hereby modified to exclude from the wilderness approximately twenty-eight acres as depicted on a map entitled "UL Bend Wilderness Deletion", dated July 1983. 16 USC 1132 note.

(f) To provide for more efficient administration of lands designated by this Act as wilderness: Administration of designated lands.

(1) the exterior boundaries of the Beaverhead and Gallatin National Forests in the State of Montana are hereby modified to exclude all lands within the Bear Trap Canyon portion of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness and the said national forest boundaries shall hereafter be the same as the wilderness boundaries depicted on the maps referred to in section 2(a) of this Act. All national forest lands within the Bear Trap Canyon portion of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness are transferred to the administration of the Secretary of the Interior to be managed as public lands in accordance with this Act, the Wilderness Act and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended (90 Stat. 2743); 16 USC 1131 note. 43 USC 1701 note.

(2) the public lands in section 12, township 10 south, range 1 east, Montana principal meridian, administered by the Secretary of the Interior are hereby transferred to the Secretary of Agriculture to be hereafter administered in accordance with this Act the laws, rules, and regulations applicable to the national forest system;

(3) for purposes of section 7 of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (78 Stat. 903, as amended), the boundaries of the Beaverhead and Gallatin National Forests, as modified by 16 USC 460*l*-9.

this subsection, shall be treated as if they were the boundaries of those forests on January 1, 1965;

Land use authorizations.

(4) nothing in this Act shall affect valid existing rights or interests in existing land use authorizations, except that any such right or authorization shall hereafter be administered by the agency having jurisdiction of the land after the enactment of this Act, in accordance with this Act and applicable law. Reissuance of any such authorization shall be in accordance with applicable law and the regulations of the agency having jurisdiction.

LAND ACQUISITION AND EXCHANGE

SEC. 4. (a) The Congress finds that the wilderness area within the Gallatin and Beaverhead National Forests in Montana established by this Act contains significant amounts of intermingled lands owned by Burlington Northern Railroad Company and that in order to manage the wilderness in an efficient and effective manner these lands should be owned by the Federal Government. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, this section hereby authorizes and directs the exchange of lands and interests in lands between Burlington Northern Railroad Company and the United States through the Secretary and the revocation of existing withdrawals on the Federal lands. Accordingly, the Congress directs the Secretary to accept from Burlington Northern Railroad Company the following described lands and interests therein, consisting of twenty-four thousand and seven and twenty-three one-hundredths acres of land, more or less, subject to valid existing rights of record acceptable to the Secretary.

Township 6 South, Range 1 East, Montana Principal Meridian

Section 13: All,

Township 6 South, Range 2 East

Section 1:
Lots 13, 14,
North half,
West half southeast quarter,
Section 19: All fractional,
Section 27: All,
Section 29: All,
Section 31: All fractional,
Section 33: All,

Township 7 South, Range 1 East

Section 1: All fractional,
Section 3:
Lots 1 and 2,
South half northeast quarter,
Section 11: North half northeast quarter,

Township 7 South, Range 2 East

Section 5: All fractional,
Section 15: All,

Section 17: All,
Section 21: All,
Section 25: All,
Section 27: North half,
Southeast quarter,
East half southwest quarter,
Section 35: North half,

Township 7 South, Range 3 East

Section 31: All fractional,

Township 8 South, Range 1 East

Section 25: North half,

Township 8 South, Range 2 East

Section 1: All fractional,
Section 3: All fractional,
Section 9: All,
Section 11: All,
Section 13: All,
Section 15: All,
Section 17: All,
Section 19: All fractional,
Section 21: All,
Section 23: All,
Section 25: All,
Section 27: All,
Section 33: East half,
Section 35: All,

Township 8 South, Range 3 East

Section 5: All fractional,
Section 7: All fractional,
Section 17: All,
Section 19: All fractional,
Section 21: West half,
Section 29: All,
Section 31: Lots 1 and 2,
Northeast quarter,
East half northwest quarter,

Township 9 South, Range 2 East

Section 1: All fractional,
Section 11: All.

The lands acquired by the United States under the provisions of this section shall become parts of the Gallatin and Beaverhead National Forests subject to the laws, rules, and regulations applicable to the national forest system.

Conveyance.

(b) Upon acceptance of title by the United States to the lands described in subsection (a) of this section, the United States through the Secretary shall convey to Burlington Northern Railroad Company all right, title, and interests to the following described national forest system lands and interests therein, consisting of eleven thou-

sand eight hundred and ten and forty-seven one-hundredths acres of land more or less, which are of substantially equal value to the lands and interests conveyed to the United States and described as follows:

Township 5 South, Range 1 East, Montana Principal Meridian

Section 24: South half,
Section 26: All,
Section 34:
Lots 1, 2, 3, 4,
Southeast quarter,
Section 36: All, less HES 187 and 190,

Township 5 South, Range 2 East

Section 30: All fractional,
Section 32: All,
Section 34: South half,

Township 6 South, Range 1 East

Section 2: All fractional,
Section 12: All,

Township 6 South, Range 2 East

Section 2: All fractional,
Section 4: All fractional,
Section 6: All fractional,
Section 8: All,
Section 10: All,
Section 12: All fractional,
Section 14: All,
Section 16: All,
Section 22: All,
Section 24: All,

Township 6 South, Range 3 East

Section 18: All fractional.

The lands described in this subsection are conveyed subject to the following reservations:

(1) ditches and canals as provided for in the Act of August 30, 1890 (26 Stat. 391, 43 U.S.C. 945); and

(2) for so long as the Secretary deems necessary, Burlington Northern Railroad Company accepts the responsibility accruing from this exchange to provide and manage three (3) public recreational accesses, including trail head facilities, in the Jack Creek drainage over routes approximately as illustrated on Exhibit C of the Memorandum of Understanding dated November 20, 1981, between the United States Forest Service and Burlington Northern Railroad Company to utilize national forest lands.

Conveyances.

(c) The transactions necessary to effect the conveyances of title to lands authorized by this section shall be completed within ninety days of enactment of this Act: *Provided*, That the rights and respon-

sibilities of the respective owners shall remain with such owners until such time as the conveyances are executed.

(d) The following orders of withdrawal, as they apply to the lands conveyed by the United States and involved in the transactions authorized by this section, are hereby revoked:

Orders of withdrawal.

Executive Order Numbered 30—Montana 7—Phosphate Reserve—October 9, 1917 (one hundred and eighty-five acres).

Executive Order Numbered 30—Montana 8—Coal Reserve—December 27, 1911 (two thousand two hundred and eighty acres).

Montana 1—Coal Reserve—July 9, 1910 (seven thousand three hundred and sixteen and seventy-three one-hundredths acres).

Public Land Order Numbered 1370—Hammond Administrative Site—November 28, 1956.

Public Land Order Numbered 909—Jack Creek Administrative Site—July 13, 1953.

FILING OF MAPS AND DESCRIPTIONS

SEC. 5. As soon as practicable after enactment of this Act, maps and legal descriptions of the Lee Metcalf Wilderness shall be filed with the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the United States Senate, and such maps and legal descriptions shall have the same force and effect as if included in this Act: *Provided, however,* That correction of clerical and typographical errors in such legal descriptions and maps may be made.

Submittal to congressional committees.

AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS

SEC. 6. There is hereby authorized to be appropriated such funds as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act.

SEC. 7. (a) Subsection (b)(3) of section 4 of the Rattlesnake National Recreation Area and Wilderness Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-476) is amended to read as follows:

Land leases and bidding rights.
16 USC 460*ll*-3.

"(3) If for any reason, including but not limited to the failure of the Secretary of the Interior to offer for lease lands in the Montana portion of the Powder River Coal Production Region as defined in the Federal Register of November 9, 1979 (44 F.R. 65196), or the failure of the holder of the bidding rights to submit a successful high bid for any such leases, any bidding rights issued in an exchange under this Act have not been exercised within two years from the date of enactment of this Act, the bidding rights may be used as a monetary credit, which shall be considered 'money' within the meaning of section 35 of the Mineral Lands Leasing Act of 1920 (30 U.S.C. 191), against that portion of bonus payments, rental or royalty payments paid into the Treasury of the United States and retained by the Federal Government on any Federal coal lease won or otherwise held by the applicant, its successors or assigns. The holder of the bidding rights shall pay the balance due on such bonus payments, rental or royalty payments in cash for transmittal to the States in the same manner and in the same amounts as though the entire payment were made in cash under the provisions of the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 as amended. The bidding rights may be transferred or sold at any time by the owner to any

"Money."

30 USC 181 note.

other party with all the rights of the owner to the credit, and after such transfer, the owner shall notify the Secretary.".

Lands exchange and bidding rights.
16 USC 460ll-3.
"Cash Equivalency Rate"

(b) Section 4 of the Rattlesnake National Recreation Area and Wilderness Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-476) is further amended by adding a new subsection to read as follows:

"(e) The Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture, shall consummate the exchange of the lands owned by the Montana Power Company within the boundaries of the Rattlesnake National Recreation Area and Rattlesnake Wilderness by issuing bidding rights to the Montana Power Company which shall equal the negotiated cash equivalent of the fair market value of such Montana Power Company lands, as provided in the agreement of April 4, 1983, signed by the authorized representatives of the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of the Interior and the Montana Power Company, except that adjustments in the 'Cash Equivalency Rate' referred to in said agreement shall not exceed a rate determined by the Secretary of the Interior taking into consideration the current average market yield on outstanding marketable obligations of the United States with remaining periods to maturity comparable to the remaining period during which the bidding rights may be used.".

Approved October 31, 1983.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S. 96:

HOUSE REPORT No. 98-405, Pt. 1 (Comm. on Interior and Insular Affairs).
SENATE REPORT No. 98-16 (Comm. on Energy and Natural Resources).
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 129 (1983):
Apr. 13, considered and passed Senate.
Oct. 6, considered and passed House, amended.
Oct. 19, Senate concurred in House amendment.

APPENDIX VII

SUMMARY OF ORAL AND WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE DRAFT BEAR TRAP CANYON WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT PLAN JULY 25 TO OCTOBER 12, 1984

This section of the document summarizes **27** written comments received by this District Office in response to the draft plan and a number of oral comments made at two public meetings at Bozeman on August 6 and at Ennis on August 7, 1984.

The consensus of opinion expressed pointed to the desire of the public not to change the existing status quo on the river. Respondents felt that a long history of prior use should mitigate against the immediate imposition of restrictions on private canyon users. While most supported long term protection and preservation of wilderness values, they also felt that by and large existing use levels did not constitute a problem requiring restrictive measures.

Issues which surfaced during the comment period, BLM's response to those issues, and in some cases changes in the document made as a result of public input are summarized below.

PUBLIC COMMENT ISSUES

1. Managing for long term protection and preservation of wilderness values rather than for maximization of use and enjoyment of visitors.

a. Public Comment

This issue, pivotal to the whole concept of wilderness management, met with mixed public reaction. Some felt that the issue was self-evident. As one respondent put it, "Under the definitions of wilderness it (Bear Trap Canyon) must be managed for long term protection. We obviously lay away those pieces of wilderness to keep them from changing so future generations may enjoy it (wilderness) in the same unspoiled state." Others essentially agreed with the philosophy of preservation but felt it should be leavened with a sensitivity to human needs as well. One respondent stated, "I also think that it's extremely important to let the people go to these places in as great numbers as the ecosystem can tolerate without irrevocable damage."

b. BLM Response

On page five of the document, we have laid out the overall goals for managing the Bear Trap Canyon. "The first goal is to provide for the long term protection and preservation of the area's wilderness character under a principal of nondegradation." We intend to allow for a wide spectrum of recreation uses and to actively foster primitive recreation when possible. However, in a conflict situation between wilderness values and public recreational use, we will take a preservationist stance. We feel this is the only way we can adequately discharge our responsibilities as an agency charged with wilderness management.

2. A 3-day stay limit for bankside users in the Bear Trap Canyon wilderness.

a. Public Comment

Some sectors of the public may have misconstrued our intent on this issue. We had several sincere comments urging, as one respondent states, ". . . that you allow individuals or small groups to camp overnight in the canyon." We have no intention of prohibiting overnight camping by hikers, fishermen, etc. in the Bear Trap and regret that we gave that impression to some people. As far as the proposed 3-day limit on camping is concerned, public comment was split down the middle. Some supported the idea because, ". . . otherwise people will live there for the summer." Others reacted negatively to the idea. As one gentleman put it, "I am also opposed to limiting a person's stay in the canyon to 3 days. There is not a problem with too many people in the canyon at one time now to limit a person's stay."

b. BLM Response

We feel that at certain times there is a sizable population of visitors in the Bear Trap Canyon. With the limited terrain that recreationists can utilize and camp on, the fairest way to ensure that those who want to visit the area and experience the wilderness environment and enjoy the canyon is to limit individual stays in the area to 3 days.

3. Prohibition of overnight camping by floaters.

a. Public Comment

Comment on this issue came from both sides of the user spectrum. Although probably very few floaters use the canyon as other than a day-use area, some felt strongly that as Bear Trap is the only overnight whitewater float in this part of the state, camping should be allowed for the private boaters. As one floater stated, "I think it would be unfair to prohibit overnight use by boaters while still permitting it for hikers. Alter all, boaters per se don't cause necessarily a higher impact on a campsite than hikers." Another respondent represented the opposite viewpoint, ". . . not needed for such a short stretch of river. Hikers have to work harder to get to a spot and floaters would always get to the spot first."

b. BLM Response

By proposing this restriction on overnight camping, we are attempting to decrease the human impact on the area while providing equal opportunity with minimum regulation. Our justification is that the area is best adapted to the day float visitation which makes up the vast majority of Bear Trap boating use, and, although the number of floating campers are presently few, we do not want to encourage this potentially solitude-disturbing activity in the canyon.

4. In order to discourage use, no identification signs will be placed at the entrance to the west side trail, no maintenance will be done and no bridge will be constructed over Warm Springs Creek to facilitate access.

a. Public Comment

Public input was totally in favor of this proposal. As one respondent stated, "... the trail simply follows the river so you don't need the slash and sign routine to prevent people from getting lost ... a bridge (over Warm Springs Creek) would surely invite infractions from trail bikes."

b. BLM Response

Our management of the west side trail will be aimed at minimizing, but not prohibiting use.

5. Minimal maintenance policy on the east side trail which leads from the trail head on the northern edge of the wilderness to the MPC powerhouse.

a. Public Comment

The people who responded on this issue felt that some maintenance of fragile areas of the trail and trash pickup should be performed on the trail. One individual wrote, "I think maintenance of the easily erodible areas along the river should be done — there is such heavy use in the northern 1-2 miles, this resource can be easily damaged and new trails are cut into the bank to keep feet dry."

b. BLM Response

Our position in the plan was to curtail new trail construction and major trail widening while still allowing for site-specific hand tool maintenance. We feel the direction in the plan is adequate.

6. Closure of the east side trail at the MPC powerhouse.

a. Public Comment

Comment, although in some cases sympathetic to the reasoning behind the proposed closure, was almost universal in opposing the action. As one respondent pointed out, "... this limits the use of the south end of the canyon by hikers, hunters and fishermen. I feel this caters more to the Bozeman people as the Ennis people would have to travel all the way around through Norris and then hike several miles up the river canyon to use the south end of the the canyon." In order to decrease interference with MPC operations at the powerhouse and to avoid the safety problems, several commenters suggested rerouting the trail above the powerhouse.

b. BLM Response

There are basically four reasons behind our proposal to close the east side trail at the powerhouse. (1) Safety. The overflow chute discharges whenever water is routed away from the power turbines. This occurs during equipment malfunctions, electrical storms, etc. and has averaged 15-20 times per year. As there is only 30 seconds time between when a warning siren goes off and the overflow chute discharges, a person caught in the water channel or immediately downstream would be in danger. Likewise, the electrical equipment adjacent to the powerhouse is unprotected and poses a danger to passersby. Although BLM could utilize fencing to screen the electrical equipment and a bridge across the overflow chute, liability and legal problems would still remain. (2) Non-interference with MPC operations. MPC has been rather flexible and accommodating in allowing the public to use or pass through its facilities. However, diminishing the degree of interference with the powerhouse operations will tend to reinforce MPC's open attitude toward public use. (3) Parking. A key factor in public use as well as MPC use of the powerhouse area is the very limited parking space available. By closing the trailhead on the south side, long term parking would be minimized and the available restricted parking upstream would not be overcommitted. (4) Solitude. Closure of the trail at the powerhouse would tend to increase a visitor's sense of solitude in the lesser used southern portion of the area.

We will continue the closure at the power generating station and will sign and fence off access in coordination with MPC. However, a relocation of the existing trail will be studied for future implementation.

It should be pointed out that crossing the footbridge immediately upstream of the powerhouse gives fishermen and hikers access to portions of the south end of the area.

7. Prohibition of horse use in the canyon.

a. Public Comment

The responding public was again split on this issue. On one side, comment mirrored the following: "... in the Bear Trap the corridor is so narrow that the trail use would all be on the main system and the residual impact would be too great." And from another commenter, "The trail in the narrow part of the canyon does not allow for separation of hikers and horses." Those in favor of horse use in the canyon agreed with this respondent, who stated, "... I think elimination of horseback use in the canyon is ridiculous. What harm does the little horseback use have on this area?"

b. BLM Response

Several factors are relevant to this issue. First, the impact of horse use in the bottom of the canyon both on the trail itself and on the feeling of solitude of visitors is quite high. Conversely, horse use on the rims of the canyon has minimal adverse effect on visitors or on the environment of the canyon. Second, if we were to permit horse use up Bear Trap Creek, we would be inviting horseback visitors to trespass on private lands owned by the Flying D Ranch as the creek drainage head abuts directly on private ownership. Third, the impact of horse use in the canyon would be very high during the spring, when the trails are wet and easily damaged and during the summer when visitation is high, but would be much less during fall. Consequently, BLM will continue to prohibit horse use in the canyon during the prime user season. However, we will permit horse use for the purposes of access out of the canyon during hunting season, October 15 to December 15. BLM will attempt to acquire an easement from the Flying D Ranch to permit horse packers to legally traverse the ranch's land to gain access to the popular Forest Service hunting areas.

8. Allow naturally caused wildfire to burn up to the ridgeline when conditions are within the limitations prescribed by an approved fire management plan.

a. Public Comment

The input we received was completely in favor of the plan's direction on this issue. However, as one respondent pointed out, "I'm not sure you could stop a fire fast enough in this area to keep it from burning to the ridgelines anyways." Another comment pointed out the need for public education before a wilderness fire is allowed to burn under prescription.

b. BLM Response

The fire section has been rewritten to bring it more in line with current BLM fire management thinking.

9. Proposed toilet to be built at Bear Trap Creek.

a. Public Comment

Public response was minimal on this issue and was equally divided. Those who felt that the proposal merited attention pointed out that "... the area is small and will be intensely used (so that) a toilet in this location is like insurance for a little cleanliness around the Bear Trap Creek Area." Others felt that the toilet was not yet necessary, but suggested, "careful monitoring of sanitary conditions as more people use the site."

b. BLM Response

We will continue monitoring the area and will implement construction of a vault-type inconspicuous toilet when the need is indicated.

10. Limiting commercial floating to existing historic use.

a. Public Comment

The public was very vocal and quite polarized on this issue. Those in favor of maintaining outfitters to historic number of commercial ventures and historic number of launches argued that "emphasis (should be) placed more for the the enjoyment of the nonprofit recreationist." As one respondent put it, "I strongly recommend keeping the commercial use down and the number of outfitters down. We don't need daily launches in the Bear Trap for commercial use."

Those proposing an increase in outfitting activity state that, "... the Bear Trap could handle a considerably higher level of use by commercial outfitters without adversely affecting wilderness values." Further, "... there is no data to prove that float trips, even commercial ones are adversely impacting wilderness values in the canyon." Other respondents find particular problems with the lack of flexibility inherent in status quo (historic use) management. One pointed out that if one of the two permitted outfitters goes out of business, the plan would force a replacement outfitter to fill the vacated niche, fishing floating or recreational floating. Another problem which surfaced with historic use was a real concern over only permitting 2 boats per commercial party when 3 boats with the same number of clients gives a superior safety factor in heavy water. The general feeling among those in favor of increased commercial use was that regulation should be by numbers of people, not numbers of boats per launch.

b. BLM Response

We concur that the Bear Trap can handle greater commercial use without impact. The river has about 130 days where outfitted floating might be possible, from May 15 through the third week in October, most years. **About** a month of this time, from May 15 through June 15, is generally unsafe due to high flood waters. There are 19 weekends during this time, not including the high water period, three of which are national holidays.

If we discount the high water days as basically unfloatable most years, prohibit commercial use on high-visitation national holidays and on Saturdays on the weekends in order to give the private floaters maximum opportunity, we are left with approximately 77 days. If we permit no more than one outfitted float per day and there are presently 52 commercial launches, this leaves an unallocated capacity of 25 outfitted launches, under this formula. Assuming a maximum permissible number of 16 persons in no more than 3 boats, clients and guides alike, this means there would be potentially an increase of 400 people on the river, mostly on the underused week days.

A supplemental document to be appended to the final plan will outline our intended approach to allocating these additional commercial launches. This supplemental document will be finalized **by April 1.**

11. Use allocation for private as well as commercial floating use.

a. Public Comment

Public comment on this proposal, although mixed, was overwhelmingly in favor of no restrictions on private river use numbers. Those in favor of limiting private floats felt that restrictions were justified because, "If it becomes like on the Upper Madison, there would be no wilderness experience due to boats coming by." The majority mirrored the feelings of one respondent that, "I personally would hate to see any kind of quota or permit system on the Bear Trap. I think it could tolerate a much higher use level by private river runners without diminishing many people's experience."

b. BLM Response

Our proposal to limit private floating by means of float allocation was generated by the findings of the 1981 Bear Trap visitor study which indicated a minority of those surveyed perceived that the number of users encountered (particularly floaters) was bordering on crowding. A followup survey this summer of 1984 did not substantiate this impression. Therefore lacking data to justify changing the status quo, we will not implement a private river floater allocation, but will continue to monitor the situation.

12. Prohibition on paddle boat use for commercial outfitters.

a. Public Comment

The public response we received was universally against BLM's position on paddle boat use. It was pointed out that paddle boats are being used commercially on all major rivers in this country and abroad. As one respondent put it, "These trips are not for everyone, and it is up to the professional outfitter to use good common sense in promoting these (paddle boat) trips, and screening his clients. It should not be up to the governing agency to decide, especially when private users can use anything that they want."

b. BLM Response

After having gained more experience with the paddle boat issue, we concur. Paddle boats will be allowed for commercial launches as well as for private river ventures.

13. Air Force aircraft overflights of the canyon.

a. Public Comment

One respondent requested that we, ". . . ask the Air Force to cease the practice of having B-52s fly across the canyon at 500 feet altitude. This certainly impairs one's enjoyment of the area as a wilderness."

b. BLM Response

There is no specific prohibition of overflight of wilderness by aircraft. Our wilderness management policy (September 24, 1981) states that, "Except in bona fide emergencies, such as search and rescue efforts and essential military missions, low flights should be discouraged." We will coordinate with Air Force B-52 flight operations planners to try to reposition the flight routes away from the Bear Trap wilderness.

14. Prohibition on open fires.

a. Public Comment

One respondent proposed that a way to decrease the impact of existing campsites and to allow use of more marginal campsites was to ban the use of open campfires in the wilderness.

b. BLM Response

We feel that it is unlikely that a prohibition on open fires would make more camping sites available and that there are not at present biological reasons to restrict campfires such as extremely flammable conditions in the canyon or lack of nutrient return to the soil due to over scavenging of dead and down plant materials.

15. Pack-in-pack-out policy.

a. Public Comment

One respondent mentioned that he, "would like to see . . . wilderness designation with pack-in-pack-out policy."

b. BLM Response

The plan presently states that, "Bankside users will be educated and encouraged to follow minimal impact camping procedures," although it is not specific in proposing a pack-in-pack-out policy. The plan will be modified to reflect this comment. The Bear Trap Canyon wilderness brochure currently reflects this program.

16. Water issues on the Madison River through Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness.

a. Public Comment

Two issues emerged from public comment on the draft wilderness management plan. First, one respondent felt that BLM was not utilizing the most recent information concerning the thermal problems on the Madison River. They pointed out that the Blue Ribbons of the Big Sky Country Area Planning Organization's Final Report on the Madison River Thermal Study (1983) reported that the dam at Ennis Lake was responsible for only a fraction of the increase in water temperature downstream and that no trends have been established concerning river warming.

The second comment concerned water rights filings on the Madison and strongly urged BLM to condemn or otherwise acquire additional water rights in Bear Trap Canyon. The respondent pointed out the impermanent nature of state water rights filings and requested that BLM negotiate with MPC to ensure even flow releases and current flows in compliance with MDFW&P appropriations.

b. BLM Response

On the thermal issue in Ennis Lake, we have checked the cited source document and have revised the final document to reflect its findings. As far as the water rights question is concerned, we believe that the state water quality laws are adequate for water quality protection. Water quality and timing will be protected by instream flow appropriation which will be filed with the state in late 1985. BLM's position is that it will work with the State of Montana's water rights system.

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

25 JAN 1985

Dear Reader:

The final Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness Management Plan is presented for your information. BLM has made changes from the draft in this document including the addition of a search and rescue chapter, revision of the recreation chapter to reflect the results of the summer 1984 visitor survey, revocation of the private river floating permit proposal and an increase in permitted commercial floating.

Also included is the draft Outfitter and Guide Policy Supplement to the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness Management Plan. This document proposes direction on selection of qualified commercial permittees, transfer of permits, monitoring of guides and oufitters activities and expected outfitting standards.

Written comments on the draft Outfitter and Guide policy supplement will be accepted through March 1, 1985. Comments should be sent to:

Jack McIntosh, District Manager
Attention: Phil Gezon
Butte District Office, BLM
P.O. Box 3388
Butte, Montana 59701

After comments are received and reviewed, a final Guides and Outfitters Policy for the Bear Trap Canyon will be prepared incorporating any revisions, additions and deletions which may be necessary as a result of public comment.

An open house to receive public comments on the proposed Guides and Outfitters Policy for the Bear Trap Canyon has been scheduled for February 15, 1984, 7:00 PM at:

Bozeman City Library
220 East Lamme
Bozeman, Montana 59715

Sincerely yours,

Jack A. McIntosh
District Manager

OUTFITTER POLICY FOR THE BEAR TRAP CANYON WILDERNESS

This document is to be appended to the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness Management Plan as a supplement. It will set standards for outfitter conduct and service and will give guidance for permitting, monitoring and evaluating guide and outfitter operations. The supplement will also lay out a process by which new outfitters can be selected and/or existing outfitter operations replaced.

This guidance is understood to apply to hunting, float fishing and recreational floating outfitters and will be applicable only to the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness. Permits will be required for all commercial activities, day use and multi-day use alike.

Guidance is based on 43 CFR 8372 and Federal Register Vol. 49, No. 29, February 10, 1984; 43 CFR Part 8560, the Draft Flathead National Forest Wilderness Outfitter Policy, 1984 and Montana State Director Directive MT-84-198, Changes 1, 2 and 3.

1. Applications

New unsolicited applications for commercial outfitting special recreation permits will be accepted. Outfitters who wis to be included in the process should notify the Dillon Resource Area of the BLM.

Application will be made on the Special Recreation Application and Permit, Form 8370-1. Special stipulations pertaining to the permit will be as indicated on the back of the form and site specific stipulations will be appended to the permit form.

A "Proposed Plan of Operation" and personal qualification which will include listing more specific information than is required by the form will be requested by BLM when soliciting for commercial applications or reviewing candidates for permit transfer. This information will be used to competitively determine the most qualified outfitter to either replace an existing outfitter operation or to utilize additional authorized uses and to evaluate the impact of the proposed activity upon the lands and environment, including the human social environment, of the Bear Trap Canyon.

The "Proposed Plan of Operation" will include the following:

--present equipment, tack and stock (if applicable)
--proposed investment in equipment, tack and stock
--description and location of facilities at base of operations
--use of road-end facilities and/or shuttle operations
--resource protection procedures
--safety procedures
--proposed access routes
--integration of new campsites or launches with existing operation (if applicable)
--provision for different sized groups, groups without prior reservations and different population groups such as the very young, aged or handicapped

--plans for interpretation of the natural environment and wilderness use education.

The "Personal Qualifications" section will include the following:

--state guide and outfitters certification
--proof of insurance
--previous outfitter and/or guiding experience
--non-commercial recreational experience relating to the activity being permitted
--business experience and/or education and training
--three personal references. One should be from previous or present outfitter and guide regulatory administrator, if possible.
--address of three-five clients and phone numbers

2. Insurance

Outfitters will provide proof of insurance for the entire operating season at the time of application. Permits will be issued only after proof of insurance is provided and only for the specific period of coverage. An outfitter and guide permit not covered by a valid insurance policy is automatically considered invalid. All insurance must meet the goals specified in 43 CFR 8372.2 which will require the following:

a. Minimum liability coverage of $500,000 per injury, $500,000 per accident and $10,000 property damage.

b. A specific statement naming the Bureau of Land Management, Department of Interior, as co-insured.

c. A provision requiring that the BLM be given a 30-day notice in case of cancellation.

3. Existing permits

The holder of an existing permit in the Bear Trap Canyon may continue to be permitted if the following requirements are satisfactorily performed.

1) Submit post use client figures accurately and within 30-days after the end of use.
2) Pay the required fees
3) Provide adequate proof of insurance
4) Perform services to the public during the season in a satisfactory manner and to the fully permitted level of use
5) Abide by the terms and stipulations of the permit
6) Follow Montana State Fish and Game regulations

The maximum time for a multi-year permit is five years. At the end of five years, the permit will be evaluated for continuing need of that type of public service, compliance with the management plan's objectives, environmental acceptibility and the permittee's past performance.

If public demand for the permitted activity still exists, the permittee's performance has been good and the activity is in accordance with proper use of the environment and the management plans' objectives, the permit will be reauthorized to the same outfitter for another period, generally five years.

A new outfitter will be issued a one-year probationary permit his first year. If performance has been satisfactory, the permittee will be reauthorized for a further period, generally four years.

At present, permits are on a yearly basis. In order to be eligible for an extended permit, outfitters will be required to submit a "Plan of Operations" as described in the Application portion of the document. This will be required for the 1986 floating season.

The operations management plan will be made a part of the Outfitter-Guide permit and will be binding on both parties until such time as it is revised. All operations will be conducted within the scope of the operations management plan. A change in the type, scope, size, location or use period will necessitate revision of the plan.

The operations management plan may be revised at any time by mutual agreement of BLM and the permittee. However, BLM may make unilateral changes in the plan to prevent damage to the resource, or to comply with changes in established management direction or safety consideration.

4. New permits

New permittees must: 1) meet state licensing requirements, 2) have one year of acceptable outfitter or guide experience or have completed the following substitute qualifications in order to minimally qualify for a permit in the Bear Trap Canyon.

Horseback supported hunting

--successful completion of 30-day outfitters and guide school
or
--three years experience in raising and/or handling horses

Float fishing or recreational floating

--three trips navigating raft or rivers of equal or greater technical difficulty greater number of rapids, degrees of commitment, etc. than Bear Trap Canyon
and
--three trips navigating rafts similar in type of propulsion and size to that proposed for use in the Bear Trap Canyon
and
--current advanced first aid card or more extensive first aid training

--Red Cross Lifesaving course within previous three years

New permittees will be selected through analysis and evaluation of the applicant's permits, plan of operations, references, credentials and perceived overall ability to provide quality service to the public.

The selection criteria for outfitters in Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness are listed below. The selection criteria are based on the resources, quality and quantity of the experience, safety factors and economic needs as described in the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness Management Plan.

Weight	Selection Factors
10	Currently outfitter operation needing expansion
9	Positive recommendation Federal (BLM, FS, BIA, NPS) or state outfitter and guide administrators with first hand knowledge of applicant's prior operations
8	Demonstrated ability by the outfitter and his guides to safely navigate rivers of greater difficulty and longer trip duration than Bear Trap Canyon
8	Owns proper equipment or has financial ability to acquire the capital to operate an outfitter business
7	Provide clients with the type of activity specified by the management plan (whitewater recreational floating, float fishing or outfitted big game hunting)
5	Ability to accommodate clients upon a short notice/demand basis
5	Shows or has demonstrated an incentive to provide opportunities for interpretation of the natural wilderness use and ethics
4	Documented evidence of successful business management experience
3	Has demonstrated an incentive to provide or will advertise services to all populations, including the handicapped, aged and very young
1	Provide services to groups of varying size (up to management plans limits)

Unweighted Selection Factor

--Positive recommendations from clients

Each applicant will be evaluated on how well, on a basis of 1-10, he or she approaches maximal performance for each selection factor. For instance, for the 8th selection factor, "documented evidence of successful business management experience", one applicant may have earned a graduate business degree and have ten years of business experience. Another applicant may have simply operated his outfitting business for two years. We would rank the first applicant higher on a scale of 1 to 10, than we would the second. The decision analysis procedure will include a multiplication of the weight which BLM puts on a particular selection factor times the numerical rating of the applicants proven or perceived ability to fulfill the requirements of a certain selection factor. The following is an example:

Selection Factor	Outfitter A weight x rating	Outfitter B weight x rating
1	10 x 10 = 100	10 x 0 = 0
2	9 x 10 = 90	9 x 9 = 81
3	8 x 10 = 80	8 x 10 = 80
4	8 x 10 = 80	8 x 10 = 80
5	7 x 10 = 70	7 x 8 = 56
6	5 x 10 = 50	5 x 8 = 40
7	5 x 10 = 50	5 x 8 = 40
8	4 x 10 = 40	4 x 8 = 32
9	3 x 10 = 30	3 x 10 = 30
10	1 x 10 = 10	1 x 10 = 10
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This sample decision analysis procedure shows that Outfitter A scores the highest and would meet our selection factors list more closely and in accordance with management objectives for the Bear Trap Canyon Wilderness. If differences in scores are not significant within 20 points, the selecting officer may consider the unweighted selection factors, positive recommendations from prior clients in reaching a decision.

5. Transfer of Permits

When an existing permittee wishes to have the permit privileges transferred as part of a sale of the existing business to a potential new owner, the permittee must notify the authorized BLM officer in writing. When a permitted outfitter is contemplating selling, he must contact BLM before the sale agreement is consummated in order for BLM to verify that the new prospective owner will meet the minimum criteria. Adequate documentation must be provided to the BLM that the prospective sale will include a substantial portion of the equipment and other tangible assets of the business. No transfer or sale of authorized use or river launches alone is allowed.

The following conditions will apply before the transfer of an outfitters permit will be approved:

-- The previous permittee must have operated to an acceptable standard for a minimum of two seasons of use before a transfer of permit privileges will be authorized. Sale of a business before two seasons will constitute an open permit and a replacement outfitter will be chosen through the selection process defined under "new permits" in this document.

-- The continuing need for the particular type of commercial service offered by an outfitter, compliance with the management plan's objectives, environmental acceptability and the existing permittee's past performance will be evaluated before choosing to reauthorize the permit.

-- The new applicant must agree to provide the type and size of operation as indicated in the "Plan of Operations" of the original permittee or new operations as defined in an updated Wilderness Management Plan.

-- The new applicant must be able to meet any standards required in conformance with management plan decisions or by state or local agencies.

-- Potential new permittees must be able to satisfy the selection criteria equal to or greater than existing permit holders.

If the above conditions are met and the new applicant has demonstrated his ability to provide good public service, the permit will be re-issued to the new applicant. The new permit may contain terms and conditions which vary from the prior permit.

6. Fees

The minimum fee for commercial use is $50. No filing fee is required. Interim and final payments will be paid periodically as agreed to by the outfitter and BLM.

Fees are calculated as a set amount per visitor user day minus amounts paid to others for service to clients off public land and minus a reduction factor for use time not spent on public lands. The enclosed "Fee Determination Ledger" details the fee process.

An outfitter requiring a specific campsite or other semi-fixed facility may reserve a site for a minimum of $100/site. Each reserved site must be identified by a BLM supplied reservation sign which will be posted 15 days prior to anticipated use and will remain in place through the season.

Any permitted hunting outfitter will be required to use only supplemental certified weed-free feed.

7. Monitoring

Outfitter operations will be monitored and evaluated periodically, at a minimum at the close of the user season. The enclosed "Outfitter Performance Evaluation" form will be used.

Informal evaluation of the river outfitters operations will be conducted periodically throughout the floating season.

All formal and informal inspections will be documented. A copy of the inspection documentation will be left with the outfitter or his representative. The inspection visit may be used by either party to request or suggest changes in the operations management plan.

BLM reserves the right to sample previous customers as to their opinions on the quality of permittees service.

8. Illegal Outfitters

Within funding and manpower constraints, the BLM will aggressively investigate and prosecute individuals operating on the public lands without the required permits. The BLM will actively involve, and seek the support of, the outfitters and the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks in efforts to curtail illegal outfitter activity.

Permitted outfitters are required to report any illegal outfitting activities on outfitters.

Individuals convicted of operating without a BLM permit on public land, or of operating without a State Outfitter's License, will not be granted an Outfitter-Guide permit for a period of three years. At the end of the three year period, the individual may be considered for a permit along with other qualified individuals. However, applicants with a past history of violations should be aware that such violations will be considered an important rating criterion when comparing their applications with other potential permittees.

9. Camp Facilities and Equipment

A permanent facility is one which remains in place from year to year. A temporary facility is one that is dismantled at the end of the specified use season. Permanent corrals and hitchracks may be permitted in base camp if needed to protect the wilderness resource. If permitted, they will be authorized in the operations management plan. Permanent caches and toilets will not be approved. With the possible exception of corrals and hitchracks, all other base camp facilities and all spike camp facilities will be dismantled and neatly stacked at the end of each period of use. All facilities shall be constructed of native material in a workmanlike manner. No permanent facility will be nailed, wired or tied to either living or dead trees. Temporary facilities such as hitchracks, corrals, etc., may be tied to living trees provided the tree is not damaged. Temporary facilities may not be wired or nailed to living trees.

All equipment and supplies packed into the wilderness will be packed out at the end of each season.

10. Camp Standards

Outfitter camps of all types will be located on sites that can suitably withstand the expected use. All camps will be located away from trails and a minimum of 100 feet from water sources. Corrals, stock holding areas, and toilets will be a minimum of 200 feet from streams or lakes.

Base camp facilities may include corrals, hitchracks, meat poles and tents for sleeping, cooking, equipment storage, feed storage, and toilet facilities. BLM recognizes the need of the outfitter to provide for the basic health and safety of his clients. It also recognizes that camps can become so elaborate as to be inappropriate in wilderness. In the past, some camps have gradually grown and expanded without approval until they reach a degree of sophistication and permanence that is not appropriate in wilderness. BLM policy will be to permit the minimum number of facilities consistent with the outfitter's needs to provide for the basic health and safety of his clients. Items which are a matter of convenience or luxury to the permittee or his clients are not appropriate in wilderness. This will reduce the area of impact in the base camp, the volume of gear to be packed by the outfitter, and the impacts on the trail system.

Other camp facilities such as feed bunks and camp furniture may be utilized. They must be dismantled at the end of each season. Drift fences and gates are generally not appropriate for outfitter operations in the wilderness. Permanent facilities of this type will not be approved. All approved facilities will be shown on the operations management plan.

11. Stock Numbers

The generally allowable ratio of stock to people on fall hunting trips will be two head per person. This ratio may be increased by the Dillon Resource Area Area Manager on reception of a written request to accommodate unusual circumstances or to protect the wilderness resource. Outfitters are encouraged to reduce stock numbers by adopting light weight camping techniques and by reducing the ratio of hired help to guests were possible.

11. Permit Compliance

The BLM has the authority and responsibility to administer the terms of the Outfitter-Guide Special Use Permit. The Secretary of Interior is authorized to make rules and regulations to regulate occupancy and use of the Public Lands (43 USC 1411). Under authority delegated by him, the BLM is responsible for administration and management of the Public Lands (43 CFR 1720). The Secretary's regulations require that all uses of National Forest lands be authorized by Special Use Permits. The Director of the BLM, or those authorized by him, will issue the Special Use Permits (43 CFR 8372.2).

The outfitter permit is a binding agreement between the BLM and the outfitter to perform specific activities on the public lands to certain standards. Each party accepts the responsibility of meeting the terms of the permit. Disputes over permit content are properly resolved though informal discussion or formally through the administrative appeal process prior to entry onto the public lands. The administrative appeals process includes the following:

-- protest to the District Manager
-- appeals to IBLA to change a decision
-- petitions to the Secretary of Interior to stay a decision
-- protest to the State Director on Planning Decisions

It is the policy to obtain full and complete compliance with the terms of the permit. The BLM will handle permit infractions by taking administrative action, by initiating criminal proceedings, or by a combination of these methods.

Initiating criminal action will involve issuing a Warning Notice/Incident Report or filing criminal charges for violation of Federal laws or regulations pertaining to the Public Lands. Administrative action will involve formal written warnings, suspension of all or parts of the privileges granted by the permit, or termination of or refusal to issue a permit.

The degree of action will vary with the severity and frequency of the infraction. Each infraction will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine the appropriate response. In order to assure a degree of consistency in dealing with infractions, the following guidelines are established as general policy:

1. All inspections of outfitter operations will be documented by a copy of the inspection form at the time of inspection.

2. Minor infractions will be documented by a written letter advising the outfitter of the problems and requesting compliance.

3. If a second minor infraction of a similar nature occurs within a year or a major permit infraction is identified, a warning letter requiring immediate correction of the problems on penalty of complete or partial permit revocation will be sent by registered mail. If a major infraction is thought serious enough, the authorized officer may choose to take administrative action without a warning intermediate step.

4. A third minor violation of a similar nature within a year or a second major infraction will necessitate revocation of all or a portion of the permit for a specified time or complete cancellation. Such administrative actions will be based on the circumstances of the specific case and any exceptions will be only in exceptional circumstances.
   As part of their permitting process, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks has the outfitters present an intent to re-permit sign-off form to the BLM and FS. If compliance problems with an outfitter exist at the end of the previous season, the BLM will not signify intent to re-permit on the form and will notify the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks by letter that it intends to withhold approval the outfitter-guide special permit for the individual until violations of permit difficulties are resolved.

The BLM may require performance bonds in a situation with a new permittee to ensure completion of work required under the terms of the permit. In such cases, the bond will be large enough to completely cover the cost of the BLM doing the required work.

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